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NAVY NEWS

Off-sale date: October 1, 2011
SEPTEMBER 2011
£2.20

LAST RITES
DEALING GADDAFI TELLING BLOWS

SAINTS AND SKIMMERS
ST ALBANS AND TURBULENT GO A-HUNTING

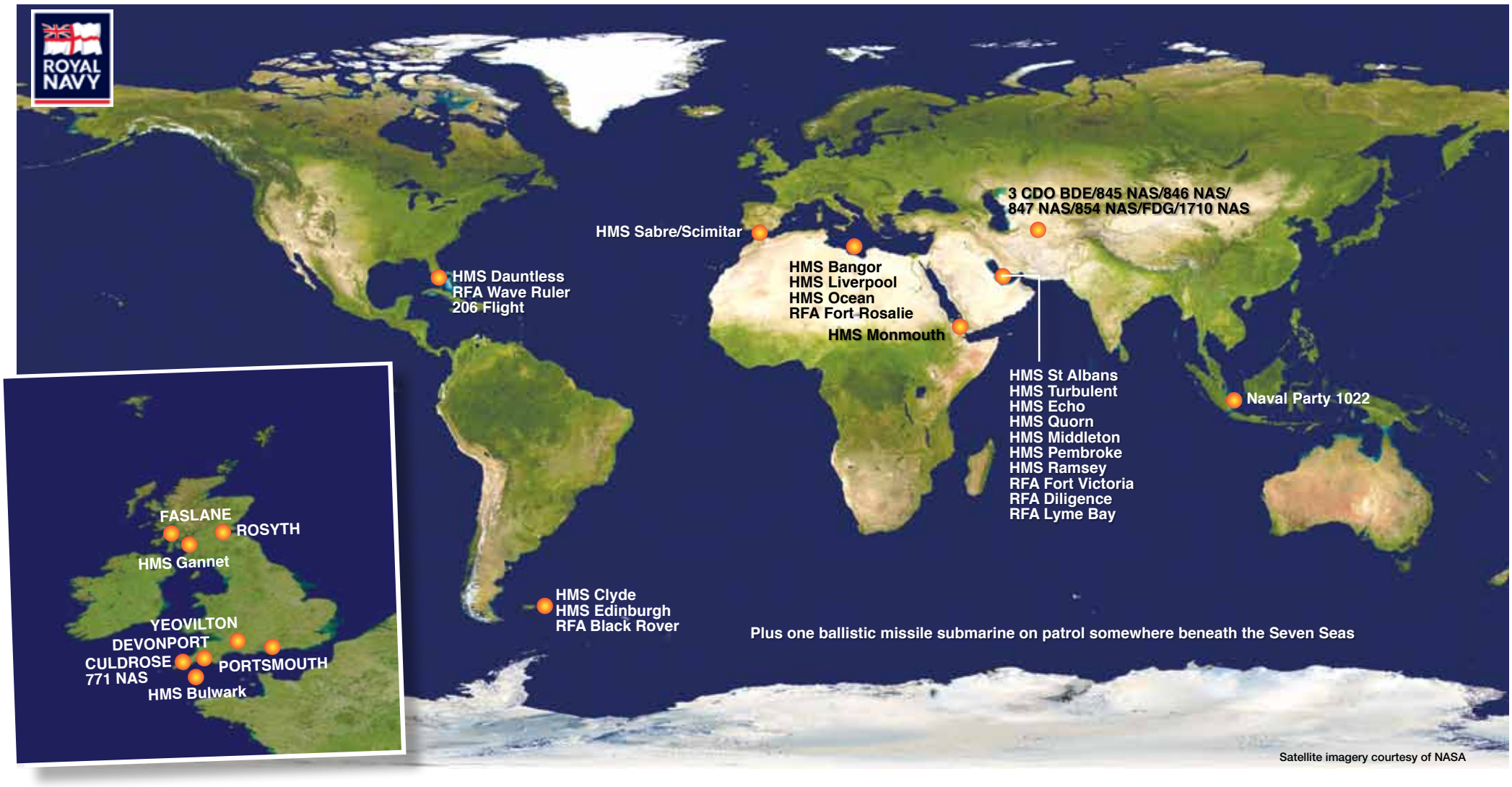
FLORIDA KEY ROLE
DAUNTLESS IN MIAMI

HMS Monmouth cuts through the Red Sea at speed as she rushes to the aid of a hijacked cargo ship. The Black Duke arrived on the scene in time to free the crew of the Caravos Horizon. *See page 3 for details*.
Picture: LA(Phot) Stu Hill, FRPU North

RIGHT PLACE, RIGHT TIME

ROYAL NAVY

GLOBAL REACH



Fleet Focus

AS IT was when the crisis engulfed Libya, the Royal Navy was in the right of the line as the Gaddafi regime crumbled.

As rebel fighters moved into Tripoli, **HMS Liverpool** was off the coast of the Libyan capital, helping a refugee ship and supporting the wider NATO mission.

The destroyer was engaged by government batteries – and gave as good as she got. So too did **HMS Ocean**, whose Apaches launched a succession of strikes against military targets – sometimes deep inside Libya – while minehunter **HMS Bangor** kept the sea lanes to Misrata open (*see the centre pages*).

As for other conflict involving the nation's armed forces, **3 Commando Brigade** is in the latter stages of its six-month tour of duty in Afghanistan with its Commanding Officer pleased with the progress made (*see pages 14-15*). Again, sadly, the mission in Helmand has demanded the ultimate sacrifice from one Royal Marine (*see page 6*).

Having passed the 1,000-mission milestone in Afghanistan last month, the Bagger community has continued to 'surprise everyone', not least the insurgents, with another drugs haul snared courtesy of the **854 NAS** 'eyes in the sky' (*see right*).

On a lighter note, Royal Marines musicians gave up driving duties temporarily to stage a 'last night of the proms' for the benefit of personnel at Camp Bastion (*see pages 14-15*).

In addition to performing in Bastion, the **Band of HM Royal Marines** could be found in more familiar surroundings, participating in the Edinburgh Royal Military Tattoo, where sailors from **HMS Montrose** and green berets from **45 Commando** staged a counter-piracy demonstration in front of more than 200,000 people (*see page 13*).

From faux pirates to real ones. **HMS Monmouth** helped thwart a pirate attack on a large cargo ship in the Red Sea and has also been exercising with the Kenyan Navy (*see opposite*).

Also east of Suez, **HMS St Albans** took part in an anti-submarine warfare exercise with **HMS Turbulent** before moving into the Gulf to protect the region's oil and gas platforms (*see page 22*).

There has been a flurry of ships returning home in time for the traditional summer break: flagship **HMS Albion** brought the curtain down on the Cougar 11 deployment, arriving in Devonport at the same time as her trusted escort **HMS Sutherland**. It also brings to an end the crucial role played by reservists on the deployment (*see page 20*).

There was a double return, too, in Portsmouth with **HMS Iron Duke** following **HMS Richmond** into harbour after deployments to the Gulf and Far East respectively. And HM Ships **Chiddingfold** and **Grimsby** completed their 6,500-mile trek home from the Gulf, Cheery Chid in Pompey, the 'boar warship' in Faslane (*see pages 4-5*).

Amid all the euphoria there were tears for **HMS Somerset** as she slipped out of Plymouth at the start of a six-month stint in the Gulf region (*see page 5*).

HMS Bulwark has been gearing up to take over as the nation's amphibious flagship this autumn by conducting extensive training off the South Coast (*see page 6*).

The assault ship will soon be joined in Devonport Naval Base by two Royal Marines specialist landing craft units – **539 Assault Squadron** and **10 (Landing Craft) Training Squadron** – which are relocating to a new £25m complex in the yard (*see page 6*).

And finally... The largest completed section yet of **HMS Queen Elizabeth** has been transported to Rosyth to join the rest of the carrier (*see page 7*). Key to the ship's success, aside from the 10,000 people working on her construction, is the assistance of the US Navy which will help train both air and deck crew (*see page 23*).

More bangs foryourbust







THIS is the explosive end of a pick-up truck used by drug-runners in Helmand – spotted by naval aviators and blown up by US Marines.

It's another blow dealt to the insurgents' drug trade in southern Afghanistan which falls foul almost every week of the Royal Navy's 'eyes in the sky', the 'Baggers'.

Some 540kg of wet and dry opium, used to produce cocaine, with a street value of £6m were seized – and subsequently destroyed – by ground troops thanks to intelligence fed them by 854 Naval Air Squadron and its Airborne Surveillance and Control Sea Kings.

The illegal drugs trade is a mainstay of insurgent activity in Afghanistan, but the movements of narcotics around the south of the country is monitored by Allied surveillance – not least the Baggers, as the distinctive Sea Kings are known throughout the Royal Navy.

Since this bust yet more drugs have been captured following tip-offs from Bagger crews – some 800kg – plus an impressive haul of insurgent arms: more than six tons of explosives, hundreds of weapons and radios being seized.

"Both the US Marine Corps and British forces continue to demand our capabilities to strangle insurgent supply routes," said 854's Commanding Officer Lt Cdr Paul Harrison.

"The Airborne Surveillance and Control Sea King continues to surprise everyone, including the most experienced operators, with its long range detections providing surveillance over massive areas of Afghanistan."

His squadron takes it in turns with Culdrose sister unit 857 Naval Air Squadron to patrol Afghan skies; between them the two Cornish squadrons have clocked up more than 1,000 missions over Helmand.

For the first time the helicopters have also been used to provide 'ground target moving indication' to Camp Bastion's force protection teams – namely details of any suspicious movements towards the base.

Bastion, outside the Helmand capital of Lashkar Gah, is the key British base in Afghanistan. It's from here that the Royal Marines of 3 Commando Brigade are directing the latest six-month peacekeeping and counter-insurgency mission, Operation Herrick 14, and there's also a sizeable US military presence at Bastion.

By carrying out sweeps around the camp, the 854 NAS helicopters have fed "a live picture of activity on the ground below the aircraft and for miles beyond" to both troops and also a large number of aircraft patrolling Afghan skies.

A clutch of senior naval figures – Commander-in-Chief Fleet Admiral Sir Trevor Soar, Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral Charles Montgomery, Commandant General Royal Marines Maj Gen Buster Howes and the Chaplain of the Fleet the Rev Scott Brown – visited 854 at Bastion to witness the work of the Baggers first-hand and thank them for their efforts.

Black knights to the rescue



TURNING at speed, the Black Duke makes haste for the last reported position of a stricken merchant ship under attack from pirates in the Red Sea.

Minutes later Black Knight – HMS Monmouth's Lynx Mk8 helicopter, from which this impressive aerial shot was taken – was on the scene... and a hijack attempt by marauders had been thwarted.

In the fading light of an August afternoon, Monmouth's specialist boarding team of Royal Marines Commandos searched the MV Caravos Horizon and freed the crew.

The Devonport-based frigate had been 90 miles away when the distress call went out and was immediately ordered by Combined Task Force 151 – one of the Coalition naval forces maintaining security in the waters east of Suez – to make best speed.

Sixty miles from the merchantman's last reported position, Black Knight was flashed up and headed off to help Caravos Horizon.

The 24 Filipino crew of the Maltese-flagged and Greek-owned vessel had reported that six men had stormed the 63,000-tonne bulk carrier; they immediately fell back on the 'citadel' – an impregnable part of the ship.

Although the crew were safe, they had no idea what was happening on the rest of the vessel – which is where Monmouth's Lynx came in.

"Having heard about the distress of the Caravos Horizon, we urgently launched to assess the threat to the merchant vessel and to provide real-time information to Monmouth," explained Lynx pilot Lt Chris Easterbrook.

"We stood off at a distance, relaying the current situation and taking photographs and video footage to aid the Commanding Officer's decision-making process.

"We had to make sure that we understood the situation onboard fully, in order to determine what level of threat the boarding team may face once embarked."

While Monmouth was approaching the scene, her ops room team were working with the nearby American assault ship USS Bataan. The latter launched a MH-60S helicopter to assist and conduct a survey of the wider area.

Analysing all the reports that were coming in, there appeared to be no sign of the attackers; only a ladder over the side of MV Caravos Horizon was spotted.

It was at this point that Monmouth's boarding team – a mixture of Royal Marine Commandos from the Fleet Protection Group, backed up by the ship's owned specially-trained sailors – boarded the merchant ship by rope from the Lynx and from the Black Duke's sea boats.

Their job was to systematically work their way through the Caravos Horizon to make sure it was clear of intruders.

"I was immensely proud of the way my team conducted themselves. This was a time-critical operation; it was late in the day and we had very little daylight left," said Lt Harry Lane RM, in charge of the Royal Marines' detachment aboard HMS Monmouth.

"At the very minimum we needed to get on board and into the superstructure of the merchant vessel before last light. We were able to achieve this with some very quick planning and the use of the RN boarding team to bolster our numbers."

As soon as it became clear that the attackers had fled, the boarding team freed the crew from their refuge and handed control of the vessel back to the master.

"My entire ship's company responded with alacrity to the plight of fellow mariners and were determined to play their part," said Monmouth's Commanding Officer Cdr Dean Bassett.

"Although a large vessel, the boarding was well within the capabilities of my highly skilled teams onboard Monmouth.

In this instance the assailants had fled whilst we approached, but our robust response will act as a deterrent to others from committing such crimes and provide reassurance to the maritime community that we are here to safeguard the high seas."

The Caravos Horizon has now continued her voyage and Monmouth has returned to her mission of disrupting and deterring piracy.

Helping the Caravos Horizon is not the only good deed recently performed by the Black Dukes; the sailors also picked up a distress signal from the three-masted schooner Boreas in the Red Sea.

In this instance it was a medical emergency rather than piracy; the crew of the schooner were concerned about the health of one of their shipmates who'd been unwell for several days.

As Monmouth was only 35 miles away, the frigate sailed to the Boreas' assistance and sent her medical officer, Surg Lt Samuel Jeffery across.

"Having assessed him on the yacht, we were able to provide some medical treatment to improve his symptoms. Given the remoteness of the location and the time it would have taken for him to get to a hospital, it was decided to transfer him to our medical facilities onboard Monmouth," Surg Lt Jeffery explained.

The frigate has subsequently transported the ill mariner to a local hospital to receive advanced medical treatment.

Before the excitement in the Red Sea, the Black Duke could be found in the Indian Ocean, where she carried out a rare exercise with the Kenyan Navy.

Sister patrol boats KNS Nyayo and Umoja were returning home to Mombasa after a two-year refit in Italy.

As they passed through the Gulf of Aden the duo met up with Monmouth for some rather zippy manoeuvres (agile and swift though the Black Duke, she can't match the Kenyans for agility and speed – circa 40kts flat out).

Monmouth broke off from the formation to launch her Lynx and then returned to join the Kenyans, scything between the two in perfect formation.

As well as keeping the bridge teams on their toes, the few hours together allowed the ships to share their experiences of maritime security operations; the Kenyans will be supporting the naval security mission in the Indian Ocean.

"I was most impressed by the professionalism and skills of the Kenyan sailors – and look forward to working with them on future operations," said Cdr Bassett.

"It was a great example of the increasing co-operation and enduring relationship we have with an important partner in the region."







pictures: la(phot) stu hill, frpu north









Arrivals 6 De

IT'S high summer which means international travel is at its peak.

For most ships, thoughts have turned to home as they made for UK shores and summer leave after lengthy tours of duty on the Seven Seas.

To Devonport first where upwards of 1,000 loved ones lined the jetties in anticipation of 500 sailors and Royal Marines returning as the Cougar 11 deployment ended.

A Lynx flypast and jets of water from tugs showing their appreciation greeted **HMS Sutherland**. For **Albion**, there were scores of banners and flags, plus suitably martial music from the Band of HM Royal Marines.

"This is a fantastic event for all my ship's company," said Capt James Morley, delighted at the turn-out for his flagship.

"They have done a fantastic job. It is now a chance for our people to spend time with their families. They missed out on Easter leave by leaving Devonport early as world events unfolded. Family support has been crucial to our success."

PO Scott Foskett was met by his wife Erica, children George, two, and Harry two months. He flew home from HMS Albion while on deployment to be at Harry's birth.

He said there had been uncertainty over world events which had meant they were not sure when or what they would be doing and when they would be back: "But despite this we were more than ready and carried out our task. We proved a cohesive team with the Royal Marines on board and took part in important exercises and operations, which was exactly what we joined for."

LET(WE) Paul French joined Albion from HMS Chatham to maintain her weapons systems; he was given just two days' notice of the deployment – a pace that was maintained throughout the four months away.

"It was a very busy deployment. This was exactly why we joined, to do the job for real under operational conditions," the leading hand said. "The highlight was helping in the operation commanding and controlling the Apache flights from HMS Ocean to Libya."

The deployment was the first test of the new Response Force Task Group (RFTG) – the UK's naval quick-reaction force – and successfully demonstrated the Royal Navy's ability to respond at short notice to unforeseen events that may occur in an uncertain and ever-changing world.

The ships left the UK in the early spring with the aim of conducting amphibious exercises in the eastern Mediterranean and east of Suez…

…which they did, but world events – notably the 'Arab Spring' – meant that HMS Liverpool has spent the entire deployment off Libya in support of NATO operations (she's still there), and helicopter carrier HMS Ocean broke away from the Cougar force a few weeks ago to do likewise (she's still there too), while floating warehouse RFA Fort Rosalie remains in the Med providing stores and supplies to Allied ships which require them.

In addition, HMS Sutherland stepped into the Libyan mission for a week while HMS Liverpool was enjoying some well-deserved down time.

"At every stage of Cougar 11 the Response Force Task Group has provided the Government with a range of options in a period of uncertainty on the world stage, demonstrating once again the value and utility of the Royal Navy," said the Cougar commander Cdre John Kingwell, Commander UK Task Group.

"The group continues to make a major contribution to the Libyan campaign in the Mediterranean and has strengthened the UK's relationships in the Middle East.

"To do both simultaneously – and in addition to the main effort in Afghanistan – is a testament to the versatility of the Royal Navy and the sheer hard work of those involved."

At its peak, Cougar comprised 11 ships, more than a dozen helicopters and over 3,000 sailors and Royal Marines.

The force split at the beginning of June with Ocean remaining in the Med, while Albion led her grouping to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates for amphibious exercises.

"The importance of the work undertaken by HMS Albion and the Task Group in the Middle East during Cougar 11 cannot be underestimated," said Capt Morley.

"The region contains some of the world's busiest and most important shipping routes, linking Europe and North America with China and the Far East. Security and stability here is absolutely critical to the prosperity and wellbeing of the UK."

His words were echoed by Cdr Roger Readwin, HMS Sutherland's Commanding Officer.

"We were twice diverted to the North African coast, first to protect HMS Albion and HMS Ocean whilst off Libya and later to help enforce the maritime blockade against the Gaddafi regime.

"My biggest asset by far is the ship's company, many of whom have seen action for the first time. They are a credit to their ship and to the Royal Navy."

"However, key to the success of Sutherland on operations is the dedicated and continuous support from our ever-loyal network of families and friends and they have my heart-felt thanks."

MEANWHILE in Portsmouth...

Alongside within minutes of each other were **Richmond** and **Iron Duke** (Richmond first – she's the more senior of the two) which were treated to blasts of water from tugs showing their appreciation for the frigates' efforts.

Of the two, Richmond probably had the more varied tour of duty: seven months away which took her as far east as Brunei and as far south as the Seychelles – with a wide range of tasks to match.

She spent the first two months on counter-piracy duties in the Indian Ocean, where her boarding teams of Royal Marines and ship's personnel investigated suspicious vessels and reassured fishermen and local dhows with their presence.

In addition to that mission HMS Richmond escorted a merchantman into Somalia on behalf of the UN's World Food Programme – providing the hungry with nine million meals.

In the Seychelles Richmond helped champion the islands' tourist industry by supporting the first international carnival and, on a more serious note, provided expert advice on piracy and gave engineering support to the Seychelles Coastguard.

From there the frigate made her way east to Singapore, first for an international naval trade show where the ship served as a 'floating sales platform' for UK firms, then to take part in an annual exercise with Commonwealth nations in the South China Sea.

A visit to the Sultanate of Brunei was the farthest east the ship got, a visit which coincided with the 50th anniversary of the Royal Brunei Armed Forces and culminated in a large military tattoo.

There was a brief visit to the Maldives on the return journey and, closer to home, a stop-off in the Balearics to help commemorate 300 years since the building of the Royal Navy hospital on the Isla del Rey in Menorca.

All told, said Richmond's Commanding Officer, Capt Mike Walliker, it had been "a demanding seven-month operational tour", and one which had seen the 200 or so souls aboard achieve all that was asked of them.

"My ship's company are extremely proud of the contribution we have made to countering piracy, feeding the starving in Somalia and promoting the UK's interests in the Far East."

Most of Iron Duke's mission was, beyond the realms of the maritime media, largely unsung.

But on her return journey she was asked, like Sutherland, to stand in for Liverpool temporarily as the Crazy Red Chicken underwent a fortnight's mid-deployment maintenance.

For three consecutive nights the frigate was in action, sending star shells into the night sky to help Allied aircraft gnaw away at Col Gaddafi's military machine, destroying rocket launchers, fuel dumps, ammo stores, artillery batteries and command and control centres.

Iron Duke joined in the precision attacks when she knocked out a gun battery outside the besieged port of Misrata.

All of which, belatedly, put the Iron Ducks in the spotlight.

Before her Libyan mission, the frigate had covered nearly 38,000 nautical miles on deployment – her first east of Suez in a career spanning two decades.

Her inaugural appearance in the Gulf proved to be rather eventful.

The ship visited eight nations, worked with more than 250 vessels from countries across the world, carried out the final Royal Navy patrol of Iraq's oil platforms, thus completing an eight-year mission by the Senior Service, and took part in Kuwait's 50-20 celebrations (50 years since independence, 20 since the emirate was liberated in the first Gulf War).

"It is impossible to capture or articulate the full range of emotions, occurrences, complexities and challenges that are inherent in naval deployments, but success is generally optimised through commitment, courage and teamwork," said her Commanding Officer Cdr Nick Cooke-Priest.

"In Iron Duke, it has been my enormous privilege to lead a team that delivered those essential attributes in spades, always accompanied by a willingness to deliver at the optimum standard, and always with a ready smile."

Smiling more than most is AB Adam 'Bing' Crosby, who got down on one knee on the Portsmouth jetty and asked his long-term girlfriend to marry him.

Clutching a large bunch of flowers, Hollie Walls accepted immediately.

IT WAS another fortnight before Portmuthians caught sight of HMS Chiddingfold.

But what's two weeks when you've been away three and a half years?

The Hunt-class minehunter was last within sight of Round and Spinnaker Towers back in January 2008, since when a regular rotation of her ship's company (changing roughly every six months) has maintained her presence in Bahrain, the hub of the Royal Navy's operations in the Gulf.

The latest incumbents of the Cheery Chid took charge of the ship back in January, since



pictures: po(phots) ian arthur and dave husbands, la(phots) dave jenkins, joel rouse, and gaz weatherston

epartures 1

when they've taken part in a series of international exercises, honed the RN's vital warm water minehunting skills, and paid a rare visit to Umm Qasr to see the progress made by Iraq's Navy.

Both Chid's Commanding Officer Lt Cdr Charles Maynard and the ship's operations officer Lt Pete Davis served with the training team at Umm Qasr before their current appointments on the minehunter – and on their return met many of the Iraqis they trained and mentored.

"It was wonderful to return to Iraq and to see the progress that is being made by the Iraqi Navy. For Pete and myself to be able to meet with many of the officers and sailors that we previously served alongside was very special," said Lt Cdr Maynard.

"There is a genuine and lasting bond between the Iraqi Navy and the Royal Navy that goes back many years and so to be able to continue that friendship during our visit was really important."

Chiddingfold's companion for the trip up the Khawr abd Allah into Umm Qasr was HMS Grimsby, like Chid one of the quartet of minehunters based in Bahrain.

The Sandown-class ship was Chiddingfold's companion too for the 6,200 mile journey home from the Gulf (more about here in a minute...).

"Planning a passage like this is quite a challenge. Chiddingfold and Grimsby are small ships with limited endurance so port stops have to be carefully considered to ensure we don't run low on fuel and provisions," explained Cheery Chid's navigator Lt James Way.

"There have been things that have tested us along the way, not least the south-west monsoon in the Arabian Sea. However, our training and experience has prevailed allowing us to respond to any eventuality we have encountered while continuing to contribute to international maritime security."

Challenging though a 6,200-mile transit in a small ship is, the Cheery Chids decided to pile on the pressure by running, rowing and riding the distance courtesy of the relevant keep fit machines on board to raise money for prostate cancer research.

The sailors ran and rode the distance from Bahrain to Aqaba in Jordan (nearly 1,000 miles). The next 3,000-mile stretch to Faro in Portugal was on the rowing machine before it was back on to the cycling and running machines for 1,000 miles to Cherbourg with the final 85-mile leg completed on the rower.

One of the mainstays of the gruelling physical challenge was CPO(MEM) 'Sharkey' Ward – so it was only right that he pulled the final strokes, rowing the last stretch to complete the odyssey while the ship herself was still making her way through Biscay.

Although the physical strain has ended, the fund-raising hasn't; you can donate via www.justgiving.com/hmschiddingfold-challengehome (the site will be live until around the end of September).

While the crew enjoy leave (and recover from their cycling, running and rowing exertions), Chid herself will undergo a thorough overhaul (not least new engines).

As for Chiddingfold's companion on her homeward odyssey, **HMS Grimsby** she sailed into Faslane 24 hours later to a similarly rapturous welcome (and, shock horror, nicer weather than in Portsmouth).

There was a traditional jet of water from a tug, as well as hugs, tears and the like once the gangway was across.

Grimsby had 'only' been away from the Clyde since the beginning of 2009 (and she's earmarked to make a return to the Gulf in the middle of next year).

It took six weeks for the two ships to reach the UK (they left Bahrain on June 28 after final machinery and weapons checks to prepare them for the long trek home).

The current crew have been in charge of the ship since the end of 2010 – eight months aboard a very small ship in very challenging conditions (it was around 37°C in the central Gulf by June).

Outgoing CO Lt Cdr Antony Crabb reckons his ship was "the most capable minehunter amongst the UK force in the Gulf, with consistently outstanding results in all exercises, high readiness rates through diligent maintenance of equipment, and crucially, the upbeat 'can-do' attitude of her crew."

Which lays down the gauntlet to the rest of the Sandown and Hunt world...

Sadly, he didn't get the pleasure to guide Grimsby into her home port – he handed over command to Lt Cdr Giles Palin just a fortnight from Faslane.

So it was left to the new commanding officer to deliver the ship's epitaph on her return.

"Grimsby and her crew performed superbly well. The ship did everything asked of her and any sailor will tell you a ship is only as good as her crew. I am proud of them all," he said.

After some maintenance the ship will resume training and hopefully get a chance to visit her namesake fishing port to re-kindle links with affiliates after so long in the Middle East.

AND the sole departure?

That would be **HMS Somerset** (*pictured below making her way past a flotilla of dinghies off the Hoe*).

The warship is Gulf-bound, the latest Type 23 frigate to support the Navy's – and nation's – long-term mission in the region: security on the high seas, defending global trade routes and deterring threats to UK prosperity.

It's the third east of Suez deployment for the ship in three years, the most recent of which was completed just before Christmas.

Since then she's received a new CO (Cdr Paul Bristowe who's taken over from his predecessor Andrew Burns), some extensive maintenance in the hands of Devonport dockyard experts, and some extensive pre-deployment training courtesy of Flag Officer Sea Training who put the frigate through her paces during two months of Operational Sea Training.

And last but not least, she flashed up her Seawolf air defence missile and 4.5in main gun, both of which were fired to prove the principal weaponry's ready for any challenges Somerset might face.

So all in all, Cdr Bristowe is understandably confident that his 180-plus men and women and the £100m-plus piece of naval hardware they inhabit are at the peak of efficiency right now.

"My ship's company are well prepared – we depart from the UK confident that we can deliver our mission to a high standard, contribute to security in our operating areas and maintain the strong reputation of the UK and Royal Navy in the region," he added.

Amid all the warry training, the ship paused for a day to lay on a treat for families to thank them for their support during the ship's challenging work-up to deployment – and to give a brief insight into what Somerset would do while away.

So there were some helicopter aerobatics courtesy of the ship's Mk8 Lynx, some 4.5in gunnery funnery, fire-fighting and first-aid drills, launching and recovering the sea boat and, er, face painting and balloon parties (not typical mainstays of Type 23 life unless, perhaps, there are Royal Marines on board...).

Having witnessed Somerset in action during that 'families day', many loved ones returned to the Plymouth waterfront to bid the ship God speed.

Such support, said Cdr Bristowe, meant a huge deal to his ship's company.

"I cannot emphasise enough the value of the support provided by family and friends to everyone onboard," he added.

"Although a lengthy operational deployment is professionally rewarding for Somerset's ship's company it's tinged with the sadness of leaving families and loved ones behind."

As well as maritime security duties, HMS Somerset will take part in numerous multinational exercises with the UK's allies and partners in the Middle East, before she returns to Devonport in February.





● *Iron Duke's AB 'Bing' Crosby proposes to his girlfriend Hollie Walls on the Portsmouth jetty as the frigate returns home. She said 'yes'.*

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Lancaster's wet again

THE waters once more lap around the 463ft-long hull of HMS Lancaster as she begins the next stage of a major refit in Portsmouth Naval Base.

The Type 23 spent ten months out of the water in dry dock allowing BAE Systems engineers and shipwrights to get at parts typically accessible only to divers.

Indeed, extensive work has been carried out on the underside of the ship

- go-fast paint has been applied to the hull (it's harder for marine life to attach itself to the ship thus stopping drag and making the frigate more fuel efficient);
- both shafts have been replaced – something which required precision engineering to ensure both were absolutely aligned;
- a transom flap fitted at the stern (it also helps the ship cut through the water faster, acting as an 'underwater spoiler');
- and four refurbished diesel generators installed to give more power.

All of which should make the Red Rose ship leaner and faster when she takes her place in the line once more in 2012.

With the work on the hull done, efforts have now moved inside where a new computer system will be fitted throughout, weapons systems will be upgrade and the galley revamped.

Gannet hit by laser yobs

SEARCH and Rescue fliers from HMS Gannet were deliberately targeted by a powerful laser whilst responding to an emergency.

The duty Sea King helicopter was on a call-out to Saltcoats, a short flight north of the unit's home at Prestwick, responding to reports of a woman in the water when a beam was shone directly into the cockpit.

The beam dazzled the aircrew, distracting them.

Luckily, the helicopter's assistance was no longer required and they were able to simply fly away from the scene.

But the aviators are perturbed by the incident, which is being investigated by Strathclyde Police.

It is illegal to shine lasers or high-powered torches into aircraft cockpits – quite rightly, as the Sea King's commander on this emergency scramble, Lt Cdr Geoff Richardson, explained.

"It is extremely reckless and irresponsible behaviour. This incident could have threatened the safety of the crew and aircraft. Had we been in the middle of a rescue, this person's actions could have jeopardised our ability to continue."

Workouts and dryouts

THE waters of the English Channel fall away from a Viking as a Royal Marine drives the armoured vehicle into the loading bay of HMS Bulwark.



Picture: LA(Phot) Martin Carney, HMS Bulwark

Although the Viking has been in service with the commandos for nearly a decade, this is actually a first: the amphibious assault ship is seeing whether it's possible to launch a Viking directly into the water, without the need to transport it by landing craft.

Typically, one of Bulwark's Landing Craft (Utility) or smaller Landing Craft (Vehicle and Personnel) would be used to convey Vikings ashore, depositing them either directly on to the beach, or a few metres away so the vehicles could roll up the beach and through the surf.

As Vikings – which are based with the RM Armoured Support Group at RNAS Yeovilton – are fully amphibious, the Corps is now proving the ability to drive the vehicle straight out of the well dock (the stern section of the assault ship which can 'floods up' for the landing craft), into the sea and ashore.

The Viking trials have come in the middle of Bulwark's Basic Operational Sea Training – a two-month workout which tests the ability of every member of the ship's company to deal with pretty much every eventuality: fire, flood, breakdowns, attack by air and sea.

Given the size of Bulwark and the amphibious nature of her mission, there's a sizeable presence from the exacting assessors of the Flag Officer Sea Training on board – upwards of 90 souls for some of the most demanding serials and trials.

For Bulwark, BOST – which some ships liken to 'pre-season training', preparing a warship and crew for an impending tour of duty – is split into two stages: basic tests such as the ability to handle the ship and deal with problems on board first, then things 'ramp up' into full-scale amphibious drills and exercises with the sailors and marines expected to perform exactly as they would in wartime.

Already completed have been a whole ship's company tow, with sailors and commandos lining up on the flight deck to manually haul a vessel in distress using a hefty piece of rope; chaff firings to test Bulwark's ability to fend off missile attack; some assaults from fast attack craft to test the responses of upper deck gun crew; plenty of Sea King action on the flight deck; and a very thorough workout for the ship's laundry.

Ship's laundry? Well, the latter was tested when a whole bunch of trainee Royal Marine commandos rocked up.

The rookie Royals had just endured four days of forced marches and exercises on Dartmoor and joined Bulwark for Operation Dryout – a chance for a hot shower, top grub, and some clean clothes… which meant a busy night in the laundry.

Refreshed and with sparkling dry attire, the trainees from Commando Training Centre RM at Lympstone disembarked the next day by landing craft…

…which stopped a good 50 metres from the Devonshire coast, which meant a wade ashore and those dry uniforms wet once again.

In the middle of all this warry palaver, however, there was a trip to the seaside with a weekend off the English Riviera.

As well as warfighting, part of the FOST test is to see whether a ship's company can cope with the more refined aspects of life in the Senior Service: flying the flag for Blighty.

The ship hosted almost 200 VIPs from around the Torbay area – all of whom had to arrive by landing craft.

RN Regional Commander Cdre Jamie Miller welcomed the guests before the ship's company treated them to an evening's display of what Bulwark can do: a boarding demonstration mounted from a landing craft, complete with gunfire, smoke and bad guys.

And on the ceremonial side, the Band of HM Royal Marines Plymouth performed *Beat Retreat* and *Sunset*.

That was followed by a day's visits from Cadet Forces and potential RN recruits who were given a guided tour, while a few lucky members of the ship's company were invited ashore for a 90th anniversary celebration hosted by the Royal British Legion, at the Grand Hotel and Royal Yacht Club.

Rather less charitable were the Brixham rugby and Upton Athletic football teams who challenged Bulwark to matches… and promptly dispatched the Servicemen.

Finally, 500 members of the public were ferried on board for ticket-only tours in a traditional 'ship open to visitors' day.

"We were absolutely overwhelmed by the warmth and hospitality extended to HMS Bulwark during our short visit," said Capt Alex Burton, Bulwark's Commanding Officer.

"The enthusiasm shown by Torbay for the ship and the Royal Navy was staggering. It was a privilege to give Torbay a flavour of the Royal Navy's capability and we sailed with fond memories, hopefully, to return in the near future."

As for Bulwark, once BOST is completed the ship will take over duties as Britain's flagship from her sister HMS Albion next month.

New home for landing craft

PLYMOUTH'S Frigate Alley will soon become 'Landing Craft, Hovercraft, RIB and ORC Alley' as Royal Marines units move into a new £25m home in Devonport Naval Base.

Two of the commandos' amphibious formations – 539 Assault Squadron and 10 (Landing Craft) Training Squadron – are to relocate from their existing homes into a purpose-built complex on Weston Mill Lake at the northern tip of Devonport.

Weston Mill has traditionally – though not exclusively – been the berth for the Devonport-based frigate fleet, although assault ships Bulwark and Albion can often be found here when in harbour.

Over the next two years, the area will undergo a transformation as two large buildings, a marina, jetty and slipway are constructed for the two amphibious units.

One building will serve as the HQ/training complex, the other as the workshops for the various craft which comprise the Royal Marines' amphibious panoply. There'll also be a large area of hard-standing to store craft on dry land.

The slipway and jetty will provide launch and recovery facilities and, in addition, there'll be a mobile hoist capable of lifting landing craft out of the water. Existing pontoons will be extended and there'll be facilities for refuelling and coxswain training.

"Creating these new facilities will allow the Royal Marines to train and operate landing craft more efficiently and cement Devonport's position as the national 'centre of excellence' in this area," said Lt Col Paul Clark RM.

539 are the commandos' legendary waterborne assault unit whose landing craft, hovercraft and RIBs played a key role in the opening moves of the 2003 campaign against Saddam Hussein. Since then the assault squadron, based at RM Turnchapel on the Plym estuary – about four miles from their future home – have added the Offshore Raiding Craft gunboat to their arsenal.

539 ASRM is fed personnel by 10 Training Squadron, based in Poole; it's responsible for training all Royal Marines boat/craft drivers from RIBs up to the largest vessel in the RM inventory, the Landing Craft (Utility), capable of delivering a Challenger 2 tank from ship to shore.

There has long been talk about 539 leaving Turnchapel; the future of the waterfront site will be considered by the MOD'S Defence Infrastructure Organisation once the commandos have vacated the facilities.

Work begins on the new complex by Debut Services – a joint venture between Lend Lease and Babcock – in October. They should be finished by the end of 2012, with the commandos moving into their new home in early 2013.



'Big Reach' is a big loss for 42 Cdo

THE past month's operations have claimed the life of 'an extremely bright prospect' with the death of 22-year-old father-to-be Mne James Robert Wright.

The green beret was fatally wounded by a grenade during an intense firefight involving his company, Juliet, 42 Commando, and insurgents in the Shpazh Gerebian area of Nad-e Ali on August 5.

The company had been conducted a patrol of the region when it came under attack from rebels.

After being pinned down by accurate fire, the patrol managed to extract themselves back to their base at Checkpoint Kamiabi.

It too came under attack from small arms fire and underslung grenade launchers, one of which succeeded in firing an explosive into the compound.

Mne Wright was wounded and despite the best efforts of medics at hospital in Camp Bastion, he succumbed to his injuries.

Mne Wright, from Weymouth, joined the Corps at the end of 2008 and, after earning his green beret, was assigned to Juliet Coy, where he was soon given the nickname 'Big Reach'.

He and his partner Shelley were expecting a child.

"James loved his family and was as proud of us as we are of him. He touched the lives of everyone who knew him," said his parents David and Sallie.

"He was so proud to be a Royal Marine. He was determined to be the best."

Those words were echoed by the young Royal Marine's Juliet Company comrades.

"His courage, heart and gentle manner will be long remembered. He possessed an open and amiable manner that enabled him to befriend all those he came into contact with, be it his fellow Marines or the Afghan farmers whose cow he provided first aid to," said company commander Maj Aaron Fisher.

L/Cpl John Seekins of Multiple 5, Juliet Coy, added: "Big Reach was an amazing bloke with a laugh you could pick out from a 'Where's Wally' crowd, and one of the most hoofing blokes you could ever meet.

"It was a pleasure to be in his multiple and only now does it hit home."

42 Commando's CO Lt Col Ewen Murchison said his unit had lost "an extremely bright prospect".

He continued: "His loss is another bitter blow to 42 Commando and he will be deeply missed, but his sacrifice will not be forgotten.

"He joins an illustrious list of fallen heroes whose bravery, selflessness, determination and dedication inspire us all.

"As we pick ourselves up and deal with this terrible tragedy, our thoughts and prayers are with his mother, his father, his sister and his girlfriend; may they find the strength to face the difficult days ahead."

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Block heads to new home

MAKING its way gingerly up the Forth, this is the largest section of HMS Queen Elizabeth yet completed.

Looming in the distance, the imposing blue outline of the Goliath crane which will help to piece the 65,000-tonne carrier together in the specially-altered dry dock at the Babcock yard in Rosyth.

This 8,000-tonne segment – Lower Block 03 to give it its official title – of the ship was towed 600 miles around the Scottish coast from one great artery, the Clyde, to another, the Forth, during a five-day operation.

It took shipwrights at BAE Systems' Govan yard two years to complete the section, which is more than 20 metres (65ft) high, 60 metres (196ft) long and 40 metres (131ft) wide. In addition to machinery spaces, it contains cabins for more than 150 members of the ship's company and part of the vast hangar.

"Watching Lower Block 03 towed down the Clyde gave us a chance to reflect on the huge achievements of the past two years since we cut the first steel on this first section," said Steven Carroll, Queen Elizabeth Class Project Director at BAE Systems.

While the ship section made its 600-mile journey around Scotland, a team of 50 cyclists were following its progress – determined to 'beat the block' to Rosyth.

The cyclists, drawn from the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Cycling Association plus workers from BAE and Babcock, had around 430 miles to cover in five days – fewer than the tug, but the latter didn't have to contend with the rugged Scottish terrain.

Stopping at Fort William, Elgin, Peterhead, and St Andrews, the riders intended to raise more than £10,000 for the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity in the process.

The cyclists did indeed 'beat the block', arriving in Rosyth about six hours before the section, having received considerable encouragement – and cash – from locals on their epic ride, such that they'd surpassed their target by £250 by the time they reached their destination. (The appeal fund is still open at uk.virginmoneygiving.com/team/beattheblock.)

While the riders were recovering from their exertions, a team was preparing to attach Lower Block 03 to the already-completed sections of the Queen Elizabeth's hull.

That operation at the end of August involved sinking the submersible barge, allowing the block to enter into the water for the first time.

The section was then due to be manoeuvred into position in the dry dock and joined to the rest of the ship so outfitting could be completed.

Meanwhile back in Govan, the first piece of Lower Block 03 for Prince of Wales has been completed, just two months after the first steel on the ship was cut by Defence Secretary Dr Liam Fox.



Picture: LA(Phot) Pepe Hogan, FRPU North

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● *HMS Grimsby (seen from HMS Chiddingfold) exercises with a Jordanian patrol boat in the Gulf of Aqaba*

Flying the flag, from Aqaba to the Avon

THE Royal Navy's minehunter flotilla has been in great demand in recent months, in home waters as well as off foreign shores.

That is perhaps not surprising, as the Navy is regarded as the world leaders in mine countermeasures work – and has to exercise regularly in different environments and with different forces to maintain that excellence.

HMS Middleton, for example, which is one of four RN minehunters based in Bahrain, hosted guests including the US Navy and the UK Maritime Component Commander, for a day at sea.

The guests were briefed on the Hunt-class ship's capabilities, saw equipment demonstrations and even got their fingers on the trigger for some live gun firing.

Two of the four Middle East-based ships – HM ships **Chiddingfold** and **Grimsby** – recently returned to the UK after their lengthy deployments.

Taking their places are two Sandown-class vessels, HM ships **Quorn** and **Ramsey**, which are scheduled to remain in the Gulf for up to three years.

For Quorn that meant a two-month transit from Portsmouth – 6,500 miles, two oceans, three seas and 11 ports in all.

And, of course, these days a transit for a Royal Navy ship is as important as her arrival and deployment in theatre, as maritime security operations (MSOs) and exercises kick in almost as soon as she leaves the jetty.

For Quorn this meant checking the Med, the Suez Canal and the Red Sea for unlawful maritime activities as well as the usual in-house diversions – fire drills, man overboard exercises and so on – while becoming acclimatised for the heat of the Gulf.

The last of the quartet, HMS Pembroke, recently changed her crew – the teams cycle through the ships every six months or so while the ships remain on station.

There was barely time for Crew 1, under Lt Cdr Richard Hutchings, to secure the mess decks and sniff out the victuals before their ship slipped her moorings in Dubai and sailed for some shakedown training.

She then visited Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates, where she joined elements of the Cougar task group for Sea Khanjar, an exercise with regional forces.

And then it was on to the bread-and-butter stuff – MSOs and more exercises with regional and coalition ships.

Chiddingfold and Grimsby stopped off at the port of Aqaba in Jordan on their way back to the UK – a chance for the Royal Navy to strengthen its links with the Royal Jordanian Naval Force as well as giving the ship's companies a break after a long stint at sea.

As they left the Gulf, the pair had each embarked a junior Jordanian officer for the passage to Aqaba, training with their RN counterparts and offering the Brits an insight into how their own ships operate.

Once alongside, some of the visitors made the trip to the fabled ancient city of Petra, while the two Commanding Officers were given a tour of the Jordanian naval base and attended an evening reception at the Aqaba Yacht Club.

Cdre Tim Fraser, Commander UK Maritime Component Commander (UKMCC) Bahrain, also attended the reception, as Jordan and her waters are covered by the Joint Area of Operations for which UKMCC has responsibility.

On leaving, the RN ships conducted a manoeuvring exercise with a Jordanian patrol craft.

Lt Charles Maynard, CO of Chiddingfold said: "Our visit to Jordan has been very successful.

"Jordan is a cherished regional partner and visits like this are important to strengthen and build upon our existing relationship.

"The Jordanians could not have done more for us – their hospitality has been second to none."

Turning our attention west of Suez, **HMS Bangor** has been on duty off North Africa since mid-June, keeping the sea lanes open, enabling humanitarian aid to reach the Libyan people.

When fuel ran low, transits to logistics ports meant long periods off task, so a more convenient solution was sought.

Following discussions with HMS Ocean's command team, rafting looked like a good option.

With the blessing of Ocean's CO, Capt Andrew Betton, Bangor drew closer to the towering flank of the assault ship, and in perfect conditions the berthing plan was adapted and put into action.

In the first known rafting between a helicopter carrier and minehunter, Bangor took on fuel from Ocean's landing craft fuelling points and her ship's company took advantage of the facilities and stores on the big ship – the needs of a 500-tonne vessel and crew of 38 was not going to make much of a dent in the 20,000-tonne carrier, with around 700 people on board.

Whilst alongside, Bangor's clearance divers conducted a hull swim to reassure Ocean's command team that nothing had been inadvertently picked up in transit – and that everything was still where it should be.

It is not just the far-flung minehunters which are kept busy.

Hunt-class ship **HMS Cattistock** welcomed seven visitors from her namesake village, including a parish councillor and a publican, for a day at sea.

And though conditions were a little sporty – 20 knots of wind and a two-metre swell – the guests were treated to a busy day showing off the ship's capabilities.

Cattistock then went on passage to Bristol for the city's Harbour Festival, pausing *en route* to conduct a winching exercise with a search and rescue helicopter from RAF Chivenor in Devon.

Two trainees from the Hong Kong Government Flying Service were lowered to the ship, and given a whistle-stop tour, then the ship's CO, Lt Cdr Adam Northover, and Weapon Engineer Officer, CPO Mark 'Bungy' Edwards, were winched up to the aircraft for a bird's-eye view of their ship before returning to sea level.

The ship then continued on to Bristol, up the River Avon and under the iconic Clifton Suspension Bridge, to take her place at the heart of the festival.

More than a quarter of a million people attended, and more than 5,000 of them went on board Cattistock and the two Archer-class patrol boats, HM ships Raider and Tracker, which attended the event.



● *HMS Bangor rafts up alongside HMS Ocean in the Med to take on fuel and stores*

Picture: LA(Phot) Guy Pool



● *HMS Cattistock sails beneath the Clifton Suspension Bridge on her way to the Bristol Harbour Festival*

Picture: LA(Phot) Joel Rouse

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MIAMI NICE FOR DAUNTLESS

THE outline's unmistakeable.

That's right, it's a Type 45 destroyer, Her Majesty's Ship Dauntless to be precise.

As for the skyscrapered waterfront, well that might prove a little more tricky.

This is the Miami skyline and the last port of call for the Portsmouth-based warship before she concluded her mini-deployment to the USA.

The £1bn destroyer headed across the Atlantic with two goals in mind: firstly to show the Americans, French and Russians what a Type 45 can do during an annual exercise involving the four navies; and secondly to see how the ship performs in a much hotter climate than the UK's.

"We found ourselves chasing heat," said CPO Taff Govier, Dauntless' communications manager. "Having completed cold weather trials in Norway earlier this year, it was very pleasant being at the opposite end of the scale."

His Commanding Officer, Capt Richard Powell, added: "We want to make sure that before we send these ships east of Suez, into the Gulf region, we know how they will perform, that the weapons will work and how the accommodation is – is it cool enough inside the ship."

The highest temperature recorded by the ship was 34°C (93°F) which is a good few degrees shy of what the Type 45s might expect east of Suez (in Bahrain and Dubai at the height of summer it's around 40°C), but it nevertheless proved a good test for Dauntless' air conditioning plants.

"In Norway, if you were cold rectifying it was as simple as adding another layer of clothing. The problem here was trying to keep cool while the engineers worked tirelessly to balance the air conditioning aboard," said Taff.

"I'm pleased to report it got much, much better and habitability throughout the ship increased tenfold."

The Floridian weather was kind enough to Dauntless to permit horse racing, bingo and cinema nights on the flight deck, but not to allow the ship's company to catch the final Space Shuttle launch; they couldn't see Atlantis race skywards from the ship's position offshore.

"There were plenty of other things to catch the eye should you stroll on to the upper deck, including water spouts and hammerhead sharks," said Taff.

The mini deployment across the Pond also allowed two 815 Naval Air Squadron helicopters, five aircrew and 13 technicians and engineers the unique chance to operate a pair of Lynxes simultaneously.

Despite the Dauntless' expansive flight deck (it can accommodate a Chinook if needs must), there's only one 'spot' to land – you can't set two Lynx down simultaneously on a 45's deck, as Flight Commander Lt Cdr Steve Hilson explains.

"To operate two helicopters successfully, there are times when the flight deck is out of action because of the helicopter on deck – it's known as 'blacking' the deck.

"It only becomes an issue if one of the helicopters has a problem airborne and needs to land quickly and the deck is 'blacked' by the other aircraft.

"Multi aircraft operations from single spot ships can be challenging if the procedures are not properly understood by all those involved with flying – they need to become instinctive.

"Operating in the middle of the ocean with nowhere else to go if there are serious problems with either the helicopter or ship are the things that make these types of operations so challenging."

With all trials done, the destroyer made for Miami and a four-day visit which gave the sailors R&R after hosting some official visits, including the local police chief.

While in Florida, the ship featured on CBS Miami, the local news channel, (but sadly not *CSI Miami*…) among other media outlets, who were not just fascinated by the rare sight of a Royal Navy warship in Florida, but also the sight of Brits abroad.

"The local press made a big thing of having a British warship – especially one at the cutting edge of technology – alongside and the headlines in some of the papers were quite funny," said CPO Taff Govier, Dauntless' communications manager.

"One report commented on how we were all as red as lobsters after a little too much sun – not necessarily accurate, but very funny."

And the American media were particularly interested in the destroyer's links with another HMS Dauntless – the fictional vessel in the *Pirates of the Caribbean* blockbusters.

"We've not managed to make too much of it yet, but we're hoping to get Johnny Depp on board at some stage," said Capt Powell. "And Keira Knightley…"

Sadly, he won't get to see either Hollywood star as he's now handed over command of D33 to Capt Will Warrender.

As for the ship, she's back in Portsmouth undergoing a spot of maintenance before an autumn of training ahead of her inaugural deployment in the new year.

Picture: Armando Raul Rodriguez, Miami Dade County



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Raleigh open day success

WE'D have preferred it if the fire fighters had been facing the other way...

Visitors observe how sailors tackle blazes aboard Her Majesty's warships during a day of demonstrations at HMS Raleigh.

Some 3,000 people passed through the gates of the Torpoint training establishment for its annual open day.

Although most of the intrigued visitors were relatively local, some came from as far away as Essex, Doncaster and South Wales to see what goes on behind the Raleigh fence.

The base is home to all basic entry training, plus the RN Submarine, logistics and boarding training schools. It's also the centre for damage control training and home to the Band of HM Royal Marines Plymouth.

The latter performed two sets, while a Lynx Mk8 from RNAS Yeovilton was on the tarmac for people to look around, submarine school staff fired up the sonar simulators and the doors of Raleigh's futuristic heritage and communications centre were opened for visitors to try their hands at some computerised training.

All this happened on a 'working day' at Raleigh with new entry recruits undergoing their final hours of instruction as part of the ten-week induction course before they passed out the following day.

"I passed out of Raleigh 20 years ago as one of the first Wrens to go to sea," said Paris Campbell-Martin from Essex, who brought her 13-year-old son Cameron and his best friend to the base.

"Cameron has recently joined the Sea Cadets and I wanted him to see what I had experienced in the Navy.

"We had a fantastic day and, for me, it was very nostalgic. Raleigh doesn't seem any different – I could literally put my uniform back on and there's my accommodation block."

Fifteen veterans from Newport RNA also found memories came flooding back.

"We were made very welcome and had a thoroughly enjoyable afternoon," said trip organiser Gordon Williams.

"I've got a lovely photo of me aged 16 on the steps on the parade ground. It's been lovely to come back – we're all very proud to be Navy and to come back here."



Picture: Dave Sherfield, HMS Raleigh



● *Don't tell them, but they finished filming Braveheart 15 years ago... Temeraire's Lt Doug Wylie, CPO(PT) Jan Matthews and Lt Kerry Packer paint their faces for Blue September*

Picture: LA(Phot) Dave Jenkins, FRPU East

Blue is the colour

HOT on the heels of Big Cig (frequently pictured in the pages of *Navy News* undergoing all sorts of humiliations) comes a new health campaign – Blue September.

Sailors in ships, submarines and establishments will be encouraged to paint their faces blue over the next 30 days to raise awareness of men's health issues, as the equivalent of the women's pink cancer campaign,.

Lt Doug Wylie, from HMS Temeraire, explained: "Everyone knows about breast cancer and the 'pink ribbons' publicity, but not many people realise that men statistically are more likely to die from cancer than women are.

"One reason for this is that men are often much slower in coming forward and seeking medical help, and this delay in diagnosis can cause real problems. Many male cancer deaths can be prevented through healthy lifestyle decisions and early detection.

"We want people to pop down and seek medical advice if they think something's amiss, or just to set their mind at rest – it's easy to do and doesn't take long."

In the UK, 154,000 men are diagnosed with cancer every year and 81,000 die, but many of these deaths could be prevented with early treatment.

Blue September follows on from the Military No Smoking Day that took place last March (cue for Big Cig) and the National Men's Health Week held in June.

Information advising Unit Health Committees has been forwarded to all establishments, ships and submarines to help them organise low-cost events to raise awareness of the problem.

For further information and help on planning a campaign, contact Lt Wylie on 9380 27701 or CPOPT Paul Newcombe on 9380 27743, or visit **www.blueseptember.org.uk/index.php**.

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Victory enters the Stone age

YES, that is one of the world's greatest guitarists (or, if you're under 20, Johnny Depp's dad...) at the top of HMS Victory's gangway.

Keith Richards – founder member of the Rolling Stones, legendary axeman, occasional actor and, in his younger days, a rock 'n' roll bad boy – is also a bit of a naval history buff.

Weaned in his youth on the deeds of Horatio Hornblower and returning to the days of sail years later when he picked up the novels of Patrick O'Brian (in between there was quite a bit of debauchery...), Keith had always hankered for a good look around Nelson's flagship.

He came aboard as a boy during a school trip, but organising a return visit took a little time – not least because it required a private tour, otherwise he'd have been mobbed by fans and autograph hunters.

So with the tourists off site, Victory's crew and historic dockyard staff guided Keith around the ship, describing life aboard, while in return the guitarist talked about his interest in naval history and his role in the *Pirates of the Caribbean* blockbusters; Johnny Depp reportedly based many of the mannerisms of Capt Jack Sparrow on Keith... who subsequently starred as Jack's dad in two of the movies.

After looking around Victory, the Rolling Stone popped into the National Museum of the Royal Navy opposite to pose for photos with guests attending a function and signed autographs for staff.

Keith's not the only rock star who's been impressed by the great ship of the line recently.

Last year Aerosmith guitarist Joe Perry toured Victory and subsequently enthused in a blog that it was "a dream come true".

Keith Richards entered this world in December 1943 – just about the last time HMS Victory was without her masts...until today. (Apologies for the very dubious segue...)

The ship has now been dismasted as a ten-year restoration project begins in earnest.

The main topgallant mast – the highest point on the 250-year-old vessel was carefully craned off in mid-August, one week later than planned courtesy of the good old British weather.

All three of Victory's masts are being removed as part of a mammoth restoration project, as will Victory's bowsprit, booms, yards and spars, 768 wooden blocks – some of them 100 years old – and 26 miles of rigging (enough to stretch from Portsmouth to Littlehampton).

The ship has not been without her masts since 1944, and although Victory undergoes almost constant maintenance, there's not been a restoration project on this scale since she was repaired following the battering she took at Trafalgar in 1805.

"Watching the team painstakingly disassemble the rigging and masts of Victory has been heart-stopping at times," said Prof Dominic Tweddle, Director General of the National Museum of the Royal Navy.

"To do this intricate work while still keeping Victory open to the public has been a logistical masterpiece.

"When her topmasts are down, Victory will look much as she did after Trafalgar when she had to be towed to Gibraltar for repairs."

Most of the restoration work is being carried out by shipwrights from BAE Systems who found surprises at the top of the masts during inspections before the removal.

When experts last inspected the three mast tops, they left behind time capsules; in the case of the foremast cap there was a newspaper and daily orders from February 21 2002 (not an especially earth-shattering day in world history, although the 19th Winter Olympics were drawing to a close), and in the mizzen mast cap there was not only a book on the history of HMS Victory but a signed sheet of all the riggers working on August 5 2003.

Apparently there's a special treat in store when the main mast cap is inspected…

While the work on Victory continues, there'll soon be an interactive exhibition appearing in the historic dockyard showing how the ship was built and how she has been maintained and restored since.

All hands on trek for Enterprise

JUST a couple of months after returning home following a protracted deployment, the men and women of HMS Enterprise are preparing to head out again.

The survey ship completed a two-year deployment in June and, after leave for the ship's company and maintenance for the 3,500-tonne vessel, the Mighty E (to avoid confusion with the US Navy's Big E which is *slightly* larger) put to sea at the beginning of August for 'shakedown'.

Shakedown allows sailors to shake off any cobwebs which have built up during leave and steel themselves for the impending rigours of Operational Sea Training (which should be happening right about now).

The training began in earnest with the visit of the Devonport Flotilla Operational Assurance team who spent two days on Enterprise and put the sailors through several training serials including man overboard, fire fighting and live weapon testing.

Typically there are 48 souls aboard Enterprise, but for shakedown that was increased to the full complement of 72.

The survey vessel is crewed by two thirds of the ship's company at any one time; the rest are on courses/training/leave. The rotation allows Enterprise, and her sister Echo, to remain on station for years at a time.

With all three watches aboard for shakedown, it allowed the whole ship's company to enjoy the benefit of the bespoke training and the chance to train in situations that many of the crew will find less familiar.

Exercises such as conducting anti-air warfare and working in a task group are bread and butter to the rest of the Fleet, but are atypical fare in the hydrographic world – the survey ships normally operate independently.

In addition the training includes tasks the ship's company will be expected to perform, notably protecting the Mighty E against small fast attack craft.

Enterprise is due to resume her survey patrols in November.

Psy-di-hi

THE Navy's ranking officer visited the UK's military psyops specialists to see how the pen can prove mightier than the sword in Afghanistan.

Members of 15 (UK) Psychological Operations Group generate truthful and attributable material to positively influence attitudes and behaviour amongst carefully-targeted audiences in support of military operations.

Using methods such as FM radio, handbills and word of mouth, the group's 34 regulars and 24 reservists are drawn from all three Services.

Their main task is to man and support a 12-strong PsyOps Support Element permanently based with the Task Force Helmand HQ in Lashkar Gah, Helmand Province – as First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope learned on a visit to the UK headquarters at Chicksands.

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V is for Victorious

MAKING her way down the Clyde to begin another unsung deterrent patrol somewhere beneath the surface of the Seven Seas is the second of the Royal Navy's quartet of ultimate war machines.



And while 135 men guide HMS Victorious through the latest three-month deployment, out of sight and largely out of mind, some of their comrades have been flying the Victorious flag very publically.

All the Vanguard-class ballistic missile boats have two crews to ensure the constant vigilance of the deterrent patrols are maintained 24/7/365.

While the starboard crew were at sea, ten members of Victorious' port crew reaffirmed links with the Faslane-based boat's affiliated town.

It's been quite some time since the deeps have visited Burton-upon-Trent, so they left Argyll and Bute for a three-day 650-mile round trip to put that right.

First stop for the submariners, TS Modwena, Burton's Sea Cadet unit, where they chatted with youngsters, instructors and enjoyed Evening Colours.

Next port of call, the town hall to meet local councillors/officials, led by Mayor Cllr Patricia Ackroyd, who gave the submariners a tour and opened the East Staffordshire silver and trophy cabinet to mark the occasion.

Fundamental to ties between the town and submarine are the efforts of former reservist and submariner (WW2 X-craft midget boats, *slightly* smaller than Victorious) Cdr Keith Hornby Priestnall.

The retired officer is a member of the Burton Club, and invited the Victorious men to dinner where guests included a French officer with the NATO Rescue Submarine team who has close links with the town.

A good meal requires a good drink, and as it happens Burton is one of the nation's great brewing towns: Carling, Worthington, Bass and Coors are all produced here.

So too is Marston's, a very popular tipple in the Midlands especially; it's probably very popular aboard Victorious too now after the submariners were given a guided tour of their Burton works, were shown how the firm's famous cask-fermented Pedigree beer is made and bottled… and were made an offer they couldn't refuse: a free pint.

The last port of call was a humbling and heart-warming experience: Fountains Primary School, one of the boat's chosen good causes.

The school provides education and support for children with a wide range of disabilities up to the age of 19. After joining pupils and staff for morning exercises, the submariners split up to spend time with the younger children in the classrooms.

Today's Victorious is the fifth and most powerful Royal Navy vessel to carry the name, but it's her predecessor which was crowned with the laurel wreath of victory.

The fourth Victorious, an Illustrious-class fleet carrier, earned 11 of the 12 honours today's boat proudly displays on her battle board.

The first of those 11 honours was earned within a fortnight of the ship being commissioned as the carrier launched Swordfish strikes against the Bismarck.

Later in the war – and equipped with more potent aircraft – she would deal blows to Bismarck's sister Tirpitz in Norwegian waters.

In between, Victorious saw action on convoys to the USSR and in the Mediterranean; she was damaged during the famous Pedestal mission to support Malta in the face of the Axis onslaught.

She was damaged again when dispatched to the Far East with the British Pacific Fleet in the closing months of WW2.

Her armoured flight deck meant she was operating aircraft again just hours after being struck by Japanese kamikaze.

She was almost completely rebuilt in 1958 and continued her career in the Atlantic, Mediterranean and Far East before being withdrawn from service at very short notice in March 1968. She was towed to Faslane to be broken up in the summer of 1969.

The Victorious line begins in 1785 with a third rate two-decker of 74 guns which spent the bulk of her career in the East Indies.

She was followed by a near-identical vessel in 1808 which fought the French in the Med before eventually ending up in Portsmouth as a receiving ship for more than four decades.

The third Victorious was a 15,000-ton Majestic-class pre-Dreadnought battleship, launched in Chatham in October 1895.

She spent many fairly uneventful years in both the Mediterranean and Channel Fleets before taking up a permanent mooring at Scapa Flow as a dockyard repair ship midway through World War 1. She was broken up in the early 20s.

Battle honours

Rivoli	1812
Bismarck	1941
Norway	1941-4
Arctic	1941-2
Malta Convoys	1942
North Africa	1942
Biscay	1942
Sabang	1944
East Indies	1944-5
Palembang	1945
Okinawa	1945
Japan	1945

Facts and figures

Class: Vanguard-class ballistic missile submarine
Pennant Number: S29
Builder: Vickers Shipbuilding, Barrow-in-Furness
Laid down: December 3 1987
Launched: September 29 1993
Commissioned: January 7 1995
Displacement: 15,680 tons (dived)
Length: 149.9m (491ft)
Beam: 12.8m (42ft)
Draught: 12m (39ft)
Complement: 14 officers; 121 ratings
Propulsion: Rolls Royce PWR2 (Pressurised Water Reactor) nuclear reactor; two GEC turbines; two auxiliary retractable propulsion motors; two WH Allen turbo generators; two Paxman diesel alternators
Sensors: BAE Systems SCMS; Thales Underwater Systems Type 2054 composite sonar suite comprising: towed array sonar, hull-mounted active and passive search sonar, passive intercept and ranging sonar; Kelvin Hughes Type 1007 I band navigation radar
Armament: 16 ballistic missile tubes capable of firing Trident D5 SLBM missiles carrying up to 192 warheads, four 21in (533mm) torpedo tubes capable of firing Spearfish torpedoes

PHOTOGRAPHIC MEMORIES – THE SECOND COD WAR

IT'S September 1973 and while General Pinochet was settling in at the presidential palace in Chile following his coup, Henry Kissinger was getting used to his new role as US Secretary of State and Syria and Egypt were finalising plans to attack Israel and avenge their defeat in the Six Day War, a rather brutal game of cat and mouse is reaching its climax in the North Atlantic.

This is the moment that the Second Cod War reached its high point.

It was captured by an official RN photographer, who wired the image back to the UK where it was promptly labelled 'restricted' by the MOD. The photograph was eventually declassified and handed to the Imperial War Museum's photographic archive.

Twice on Saturday September 22 HMS Lincoln 'came into collision with' the Icelandic gunboat Aegir while the frigate was trying to protect a British trawler.

First astern, then amidships, the two ships came into contact (Whitehall preferred the blameless 'in collision'; Lincoln ship's company were rather more to-the-point, protesting that the Icelander rammed their frigate), inflicting "a certain amount of damage" on the warship. Indeed it did, because a few days later Lincoln was back home in Chatham for repairs.

Oddly, it was Reykjavik rather than London which took the hump over the incident. The Icelandic government threatened to break off diplomatic relations unless Britain pulled all its ships – warships and trawlers – outside a 50-mile limit. Whitehall complied, an agreement was reached between the two nations and the Second Cod War came to an end.

The cause of all this kerfuffle (and the First Cod War in 1958)? Fishing rights.



The first conflict flared up when Iceland extended her fishing zone from four to a dozen nautical miles to prevent overfishing, much to the chagrin of British trawlermen.

Despite a sizeable Royal Navy presence (in all 53 vessels were committed to operations to enforce the seagoing rights of British fishermen), the new 12-mile limit was eventually accepted by London.

All was fine and dandy for the next dozen or so years, until September 1 1972 when Reykjavik suddenly extended its territorial waters to 50 miles – prompting another confrontation between the UK's struggling fishing industry and Iceland's authorities.

It proved to be a far more confrontational affair. Icelandic gunboats frequently cut the fishermen's trawling lines and increasingly opened fire on the trawlers to drive them away (largely with blanks, but they did hole fishing vessel Everton below the waterline with live rounds).

And so once again, the RN was called upon to shield Britain's fishermen.

The strange nature of the stand-off with Iceland forbade ships from taking what might be perceived to be offensive action (some of Lincoln's ship's company were reprimanded for lobbing spuds at the coastguard cutter's crew), but they could take defensive steps.

In Lincoln's case, the bow was bolstered by masses of timber, while sailors created a crude, but effective, anti-ramming device: two rail lines welded to her stern jutting off at an angle – enough to ruin anyone's day should they try to barge the frigate from behind. (For good measure, the ship's company erected a London Underground Sign: Lincoln Junction.)

Such measures and the "superb reaction" from her stokers to shore up the ship after the ramming ensured the damage was not worse.

Indeed, with typical RN understatement, Lincoln's CO Cdr David Howard felt more aggrieved at having to take part in the operations off Iceland full-stop, as he didn't care much for fish...

Despite the 1973 agreement, 'war' resumed in November 1975 when the fisheries limit was stretched to 200 miles – again without warning.

The resulting dispute dragged on for nine months – it proved to be the most bitter of the three wars, with three in every four British vessels sent on Operation Dewey, as the mission to protect the nation's fishing vessels was dubbed, damaged in runs-in with Icelandic craft.

Yet again, Reykjavik largely got its way – not least because it raised the stakes by threatening to close Keflavik air base, one of the most important NATO staging posts at the height of the Cold War.

■ THIS photograph (MH 030038) – and 9,999,999 others from a century of war and peace – can be viewed or purchased at **www.iwmcollections.org.uk**, by emailing **photos@IWM.org.uk**, or by phoning 0207 416 5333.

Castle rocks to the RM sound



Picture: LA(Phot) Nick Crusham, FRPU North

NOW that's what we call a backdrop…

Set against the unmistakeable façade of Half Moon Battery and Edinburgh Castle gatehouse and bathed in red and blue (admittedly it looks purple from this angle), the Massed Bands of Her Majesty's Royal Marines perform at the 2011 Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo – this year devoted to the importance of the sea.

Given the theme, it was only right that there was a heavy Royal Navy and Royal Marines presence at the three-week spectacular – witnessed by more than 200,000 people in the flesh and an estimated global TV audience in excess of 100 million.

They saw sailors and Royal Marines take down pirates and the legendary field gun run completed by personnel from six Royal Navy establishments (Neptune, Raleigh, Seahawk, Sultan, Heron and Collingwood) around a mock-up of an 18th Century warship, HMS Unicorn, in 24 sell-out performances.

In the case of the pirate take-down, it featured the sailors of HMS Montrose and the green berets of 45 Commando, some of whom abseiled down the castle wall before moving into the arena to release merchant sailors held hostage on a hijacked cargo ship (you'll have to use a bit of imagination…) in an impressive sound, light and live action demonstration.

Some foolish marauders decided to resist... and had to be dealt with rather robustly by the green berets.

The display was loosely based on a real operation Montrose carried out last autumn in the Indian Ocean when the frigate's boarding party and helicopter scared away pirates who'd boarded a German merchant ship, Beluga Fortune.

"We promised audiences an action-packed demonstration of what we have done for real on counter-piracy patrol in the Gulf of Aden last year," explained PO Adam Cowling, second-in-command of Montrose's boarding team – and a veteran of the Beluga Fortune operation.

His Commanding Officer Cdr Jonathan Lett was delighted the ship's company were invited to participate in the event for the greater good of the Senior Service. The tattoo, he says, "provides a fantastic opportunity to highlight the broad range of work the Royal Navy undertakes on a daily basis".

That's something reinforced by the event's chief executive Brigadier David Allfrey. "We aim to create a tremendous atmosphere around the theme 'Of the Sea' and while delivering a wonderful show, gently remind everyone of Britain's pedigree as a maritime trading nation and our continuing reliance on trade by sea."

This was the 62nd year of the tattoo, drawing visitors and participants from across the globe; most of the audience are from outside Scotland, while bands from Brazil, Oman, Australia, Germany and the Netherlands joined British military units providing the entertainment – in total nearly 1,000 performers.

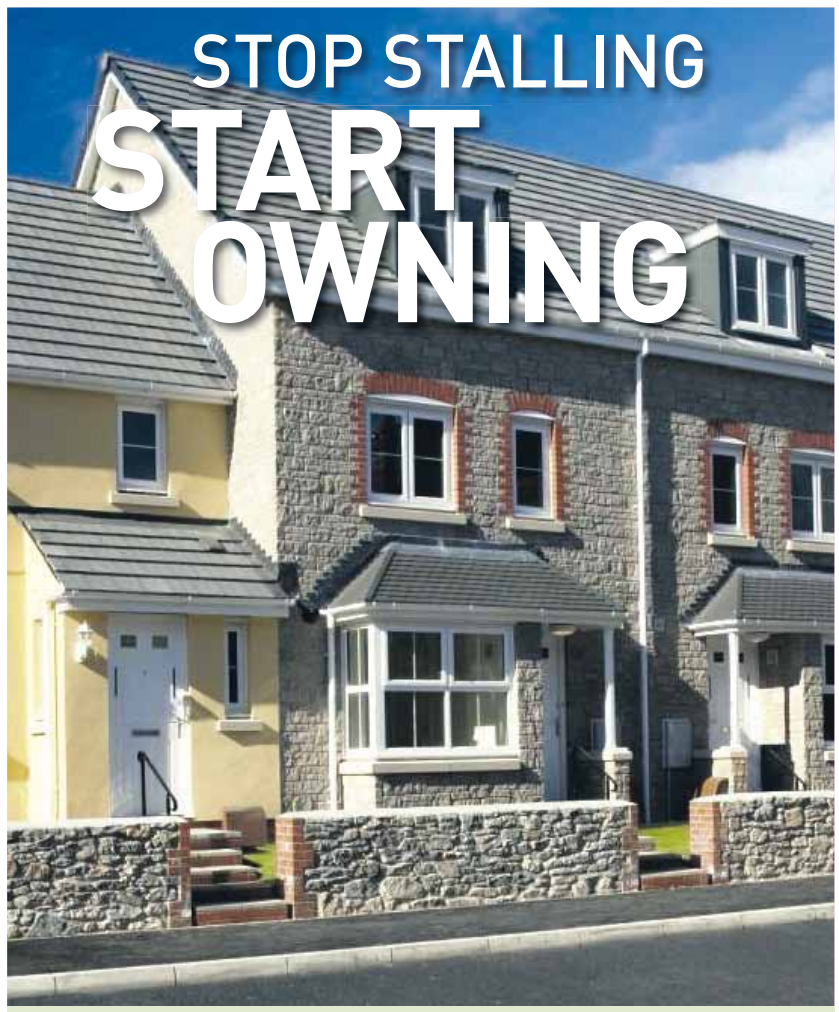
Every performance was sold out – 218,425 tickets in total. For those who could not be there in person, the BBC broadcast the event worldwide and the whole 90-minute show was also recorded for an official DVD out later this year; see www.edintattoo.co.uk/acatalog/Edinburgh_Tattoo_DVDs.html for details.



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● CPO Des Paterson brings proceedings to a close by lowering the White Ensign in the shimmering heat of an Afghanistan summer night

Bandies stage prom for Herrick troops

YOU don't need the grand Victorian surroundings of the Royal Albert Hall to enjoy the Last Night of the Proms.

You do, however, need professional musicians.

And some Freddie Mercury-esque theatrics...

Twenty musicians and buglers of the Royal Marines Band Service took a break from driving ambulances around Afghanistan to entertain their British comrades with a traditional proms-style concert.

The group of 'bandies' has been deployed with the United Kingdom Medical Group on Operation Herrick 14 – the last six-month deployment to Helmand by British forces – since April, providing support to 3 Commando Brigade as drivers, signallers and in administrative roles.

The men and women from the Royal Marines Band based at the Commando Training Centre, Lympstone, in Devon, are instrumental in the transfer of casualties from the helicopter landing site to the UK hospital within Camp Bastion.

They also drive and command the armoured battlefield ambulances used in the combat logistic patrols which supply food, ammunition and medical supplies to the forward operating bases.

Despite being deployed on a non-musical operational mission, the musicians were keen to give up some of their free time to rehearse for a concert.

They duly obliged at Bastion, the hub of British operations in Helmand, with a performance in the open area between the accommodation tents.



● Musn Tim Fairweather performs the Post Horn Gallop

"It was fantastic to be able to bring a little piece of British tradition out here to the troops who have been working so hard over the past four months," said Capt Rich Harvey RM, adjutant of the medical group – and also the band's Director of Music.

"Traditionally Royal Marines musicians and buglers have been associated with the medical side of war and conflict for many years, having been involved in every major conflict since World War I, but it is as musicians and entertainers that we feel most at home."

The programme included mess beatings by the Corps of Drums, the music of Sirs Edward Elgar and Henry Wood and a traditional Naval sunset ceremony.

The concert concluded with a rousing rendition of *Rule Britannia* sung by PO 'Chippy' Carpenter (complete with homemade trident, winged helmet and draped in a Union Flag).

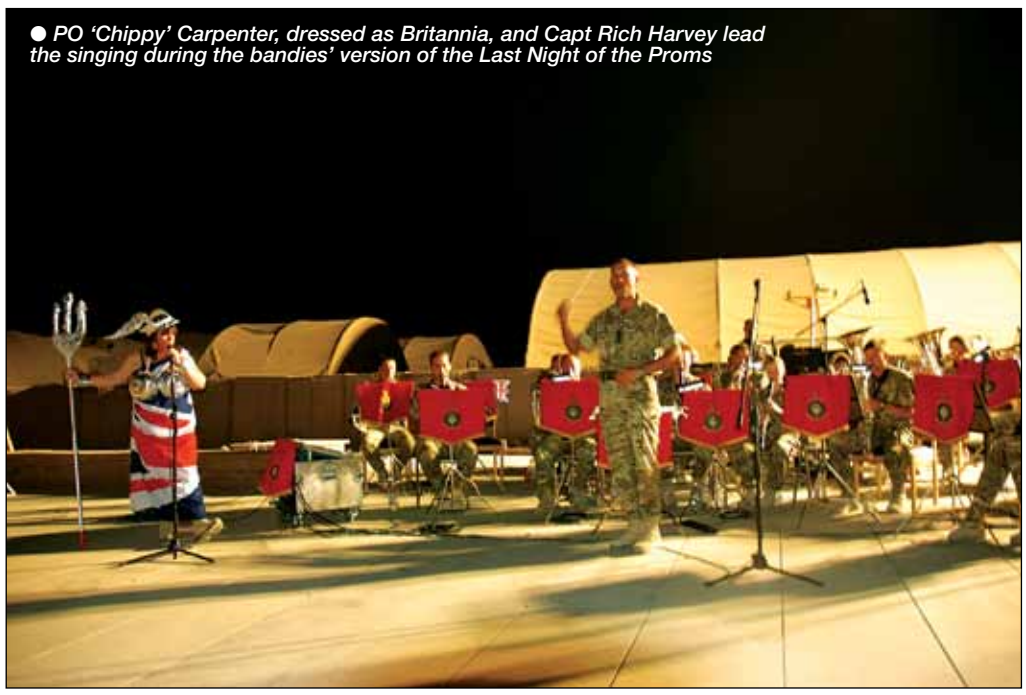
"The performance was exceptional and the effect on morale has been quite notable," said a delighted Cdre Clive Walker, in command of Joint Force Support in Afghanistan.

"I am extraordinarily proud that in parallel with being instrumental in providing our front-line Royal Marines and soldiers with the very best medical care possible, the Royal Marine Band Service is also maintaining its fine musical pedigree in the challenging environment of Afghanistan."

Within moments of finishing the concert, the musicians were back behind the wheels of their vehicles as the ominous sound of an inbound helicopter signalled the arrival of a casualty from the battlefield.

As well as raising morale, the evening raised more than £300 for Service charities.

The bandies will return with the rest of the men and women of Herrick 14 in October and, after some well-earned leave, will resume more normal musical duties in time for November's remembrance ceremonies and the multitude of performances in the run-up of Christmas.



● PO 'Chippy' Carpenter, dressed as Britannia, and Capt Rich Harvey lead the singing during the bandies' version of the Last Night of the Proms

New bridge symbolises growing



● The Provincial Governor of Helmand Afghanistan officially opens a new bridge at Salaang, built by the Task Force Helmand Engineer Group

HELMAND'S provincial governor Gulab Mangal was able to greet village leaders in a one-time no-go area, now cleared of insurgents thanks to the efforts of Royal Marines.

Back in the late spring, Operation Omid Haft (Hope Seven) – a combined thrust by 3 Cdo Brigade, 1 Rifles and several hundred Afghan troops – was designed to drive the rebels out of the Loy Mandeh Kalay area.

The district was regarded as the 'last ulcer' in Task Force Helmand's area of operations, an insurgent stronghold.

Omid Haft succeeded, such that two months down the line Governor Mangal was able to visit the district, see the progress made – and thank the troops for all they'd achieved.

His first task was to officially open a bridge over the Nahr-e Bughra Canal, constructed by task force engineers with the assistance of Afghan soldiers.

During Omid Haft, the engineers removed tunnels, which were used by insurgents to cross the canal, and replaced them with the bridge to allow locals to cross. It now forms part of Check Point Salaang.

At the opening, Governor Mangal praised Afghan and International Security and Assistance Force troops for their relentless hard work and acknowledged the sacrifice that has been made in the area over recent months.

After the ceremony, the Governor was driven along Route Neptune, a road which runs parallel to the canal to the outskirts of Loy Mandeh Kalay for a traditional *shura* (meeting).

Before Omid Haft, the village was peppered with homemade bombs and had been the subject of fierce fighting with insurgents.

Now, however, the governor was able to walk through it for that discussion with some 50 elders, plus 42 Cdo's Commanding Officer Lt Col Ewen Murchison, among others.



● *The Military Stabilisation Support Group on patrol in Helmand*

All eyes now on the future



● *From left: CPO Robert 'Tommo' Thompson, WO1 Tim Trevarthen, PO Dylan Mingard, CPO Paul Day and CPO Craig Cuthbert, members of the same unit in the Military Stabilisation Support Group, Helmand*

THE ROYAL Marine leading Britain's mission in Afghanistan believes Allied troops have largely kept insurgents in check during the traditional 'fighting season'.

The mixed Royal Marines-Royal Navy-Army force on the ground under Brig Ed Davis' 3 Commando Brigade is now roughly two-thirds of the way through its six-month tour of duty in Helmand – Operation Herrick 14.

The aim of the latest Helmand deployment is to build on the work of previous six-month stints through a mixture of taking the fight to the enemy where needed – hand-in-hand with Afghan forces – and allow locals to shake off and shun the influence of the insurgents.

"I believe the campaign is on track and, looking back on the first 12 weeks of the fighting season, I would say we have very much suppressed the fighting season this year," the Royal Marines commander said.

Brig Davis stressed it would be wrong to claim that the fighting was over and the insurgents defeated – there was, he said, "still much hard, dangerous work to be done."

But he said that the people of Helmand were clearly sick of fighting and were looking for "a better offer" – and were beginning to see that the Afghanistan government was offering them the kind of future that they wanted.

Ordinary people are resisting insurgent intimidation much more than in the past, and the brigadier said that the fact that two in every five improvised explosive devices – the homemade bombs which have claimed such a bitter toll of Allied troops as well as civilians – that had been uncovered were as a result of tip-offs from the local populace was a significant point.

"There is also a palpable feeling of self confidence," he added. "It is noticeable that, at *shuras*, the word security is no longer included in the first sentence – and sometimes isn't mentioned at all.

"The talk is about the future, about building schools rather than patrol checkpoints."

Brig Davis said the insurgents' leadership had been hit hard during 3 Commando's four months in theatre so far, with 16 low-level commanders killed or captured.

A significant number of other rebels had fled back into Pakistan.

"They are also struggling to get their supplies of ammunition and explosives through," the brigadier explained.

"Since we have been here we have interdicted just over two-and-a-half tons of home-made explosive, which equates to about two months' supply of IEDs – probably about 300 devices in total."

The result is that the enemy has become demoralised, fractured and more defensive, but the senior green beret warned against complacency.

"While the attacks are about 43 per cent down on last summer – which equates to about 70 fewer attacks across my area of operations a week – there is a hard core of the insurgency left.

"It is becoming harder to kill or capture the ones who are left, so the challenge is still very much still there."



● *CPO Craig Cuthbert on patrol in Mokatter Qala, south of Route 601 in Helmand Province*

Brig Davis said that the insurgents were trying to breath fresh life into their campaign, possibly by turning to more "spectaculars".

"It is our job to see that doesn't happen and continue to suppress the fighting season," he said.

As for Afghan troops and police who are taking on an ever-increasing role in defending their own land, Brig Davis says local troops are continuing to develop and prove their ability to take responsibility for the planning and maintenance of security in the area.

By the time 3 Commando Brigade finishes its deployment next month, roughly half the check points in the Nad-e Ali district – which has been the focal point of much of the Royals' efforts this summer – will hopefully be run by Afghan troops.

"They are taking control of some of the battlespaces on a routine basis, they are sustaining themselves, planning and they are executing, and are beginning to spread their influence east along Route 601 from Lashkar Gah," Brig Davis added.

"In quite a significant degree, we are moving from partnering to mentoring."

And while much attention is rightly devoted to the spearhead units of 3 Cdo Brigade, the Royal Navy's role should not be overlooked.

Admittedly, while it has become much more common place to see RN personnel on operations in Afghanistan, there are still a lot fewer matelots out on the ground in Helmand than soldiers.

There are 9,500 British Service personnel on the ground and in the skies of Helmand, with the Royal Marines of 3 Cdo Brigade representing the largest contingent

However, in the Military Stabilisation Support Group (MSSG), there are five Royal Navy servicemen serving in the same unit.

They are WO1 Tim Trevarthen *(see p28)*, CPO Paul Day, CPO Robert 'Tommo' Thompson, CPO Craig Cuthbert and PO Dylan Mingard.

The stabilisation group is drawn from all three Services, regulars and reservists.

Its 50 personnel are split into six smaller teams who range around Helmand helping the Afghan government get various projects under way, such as improved roads, medical facilities, a better water supply, or simply stimulating trade and everyday life.

Working in the groups has given the sailors a unique insight into the ordinary goings-on in Helmand

It is by getting out on the ground and developing relationships with locals that the MSSG attempts to gain insight and local knowledge of how best to deliver stabilisation effect.

During the course of Herrick 14, MSSG teams have helped with the development of a number of projects throughout Helmand that have directly benefited the lives of the people and helped provide sustainable infrastructure.

PO Mingard admits it can be frustrating.

"Stabilisation is a challenging role because even with the simplest of tasks, the second, third and fourth order effects need to be taken in to consideration," he said.

"For example; will the well you build here disenfranchise the population over there?"

In addition to supporting development projects, MSSG teams are frequently called upon to provide advice and solutions to Brigade-level operations.

During Operation Omid Haft, which was a joint operation involving 500 British and Afghan troops in May to expand the protected community, several MSSG operators were called upon to provide advice on conducting compound take-overs and immediate stabilisation effect or 'hot stabilisation' as it's known.

The MSSG also played a role in the clearance of the Loy Mandeh bazaar which had previously been an insurgent stronghold.

The MSSG role is at times frustrating but frequently rewarding.

Real progress has been achieved in developing the area and laying the way for the locals to stand on their own and achieve a stable transition to Afghan Government control.

CPO Craig Cuthbert said: "The highlight for me has been working on the school which is right next to our base.

"Slowly but surely, it's getting the support it requires, and the teacher is now a good friend who regularly comes over for a chat, normally trading water melons for ration pack chocolate."

Herrick 14 has allowed the Navy personnel involved to get a taste of how the other Services do things, experience something completely different from their usual roles, and to show what the Royal Navy has to offer.

CPO Cuthbert says it's also given them the opportunity to meet Afghans who, he said, are very endearing.

"It's hard not to smile when someone goes to the trouble of getting something translated in to a foreign language just to make fun of your beard," he said.

"That's the greatest weapon the Navy has out here – we can grow beards and the truth is, the population like it."

The five RN personnel are due to complete their tour next month when 3 Commando Brigade hand over control of Task Force Helmand to 20 Armoured Brigade and Herrick 15.

CPO Cuthbert admits that while it's been a great experience, they're looking forward to seeing friends and family.

"After six months living in a patrol base I am looking forward to some time at home in my new flat with my partner Joanna," he said.

"Also can't wait for half-term when I can have my three children for a few days and show them what their father has been up to for six months."

links

"The symbolic act of the Provincial Governor being here to speak personally to his people is hugely significant, and represents a real blow to the insurgents," said Lt Col Murchison.

"From this visit, local elders can draw real resolve and confidence to distance themselves from the insurgency. It has further demonstrated to the population that the legitimate government of Afghanistan can connect with its people, and genuinely provides a better option than the Taleban could ever hope to offer."

The Governor encouraged the people of Loy Mandeh Kalay to continue to stand up against the insurgents.

"It is very good that the Provincial Governor came here to talk to his people and encourage us," said Haji Musajan, one of the elders attending the *shura*. "He spoke to us about all the things he wants to achieve in this area, and I look forward to the day this is accomplished."



● *The head of Provincial Reconstruction Team, Michael O'Neill (left) takes part in a shura with Commander Task Force Helmand Brig Ed Davis (middle), the Provincial Governor and local elders.*

Pictures: LA(Phot) Dave Hillhouse

Liverpool AFCO on the move

THE keys to the first Armed Forces Careers Office to relocate to a Naval regional headquarters have been handed over to its new 'owner'.

Flag Officer Scotland, Northern England and Northern Ireland (FOSNNI), Rear Admiral Martin Alabaster, visited the Brunswick Dock site of Naval Regional Command Northern England to formally hand the AFCO keys to Liverpool office manager CPO Jack Russell.

The move is seen as a model for the organisation of future recruitment.

A small information office is being retained in Liverpool city centre to maintain a 'shop-front' presence.

All candidates for the Royal Navy, Royal Marines and Maritime Reserves in the area are now processed at the new office, which was necessitated by the closure of the former AFCO in James Street.

The Army and RAF moved their operations to Aintree but the Navy decided to move their office to the regional HQ as it has a more central location and better facilities in a 'dark blue' environment.



● *The HMS President crew row their cutter, Arthur Tisdall VC, in the 25-mile Royal Watermen's Tudor Pull*

Tudor rowers

ROWERS from HMS President have taken part in the 25-mile marathon rowing event known as the Tudor Pull.

The Tudor Pull is a ceremonial event for Thames Watermen's Cutters which is organised by the Thames Traditional Rowing Association (TTRA).

A number of cutters are rigged with ceremonial canopies and flags and rowed by fully-liveried crews.

Such cutters continue an age-old tradition by carrying passengers.

The London-based Royal Naval Reservists rowed their unit's cutter, the Arthur Tisdall VC, along the River Thames from Hampton Court Palace to the Tower of London in a flotilla of 20 craft.

President's rowing team is invited each year to join Watermen and other crews in this prestigious event.

Appointed by the monarch, the Watermen and the Royal Bargemaster accompany the Queen whenever she is on the river, as well as at State visits and the State Opening of Parliament.

The event began at Hampton Court Palace where the Royal Bargemaster accepted a section of medieval elm water pipe known as the Stela, which stands on a base of timber from the old Richmond Lock and bears the coat of arms of the watermen's company.

That was placed on board the Royal Shallop 'The Jubilant'.

Some 25 miles and many blisters later – including a brief stop at Richmond when a number of other craft joined the flotilla – the Stela was presented to the Governor of the Tower of London for safekeeping in a short but traditional ceremony.

He accepted it into his protection where it will remain until it is returned to the Palace for next year's procession.

President's cutter was crewed this year by a mixture of experienced and novice rowers.

"We arrived at the Tower exhausted, but feeling great to have taken part in this wonderful event that is so full of pageantry," said Lt Andrew Thomas, who once again acted as the team's cox.

Unit personnel in the boat with Andrew included Cdr Peter Gracey, Lt Martin Shouler, LS Lynn Ramsay, ABs Nigel Dickie and Mursal Siyid and New Entry Mathew Mazhuvanchery.

The 2011 Tudor Pull doubled up as a rehearsal for next year's Diamond Jubilee River Pageant, in which 250 boats of all descriptions are expected to participate.



Air supremacy – again

LT DAVE Anderson is carried aloft from the ranges at Bisley after taking the individual honours in the RN and RM Combat Shooting competition.

As we reported last month, Dave led the Naval Air Command Rifle Association (NACRA) to success at the home of rifle shooting.

NACRA took all the rifle titles, winning the Inter-Command Cup, though the Royal Marines pushed them into second place in the pistol events, taking the Inter-Service Revolver Cup.

Dave took the Queen's Medal as Champion Shot for the second time, beating LAET Robynne Brown into second place.

The event, designed to provide a challenging and operationally-relevant framework for sailors and Royals to improve their combat shooting skills, is not just for experienced marksmen.

Almost half of every Command team is made up of novices – 'tyros' – who are new to the event.

Top RN tyro of 2011 was LS Bate of FPGRM and his RM equivalent was Mne Town, of 40 Cdo, who were both presented with miniature swords by competition sponsor Pooley Swords.

Grand SLAM at Culdrose

JUNIOR ratings have moved into their new cabins at RN Air Station Culdrose as the latest phase of the Single Living Accommodation Modernisation (SLAM) project comes to fruition.

The new block, delivered by the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO), provides en-suite rooms for 64 junior rates, with communal living, kitchen and laundry facilities.

With 'SLAM 2.3' wrapped up, the seven-year project moves on to the cabins of 154 senior rates and 100 junior officers.

And with the completion of the project next summer, single personnel at Culdrose will be enjoying the benefits of modern three-and four-storey blocks which will accommodate more than 1,000 people.

Speaking of her new cabin, NA(SE) Kadie Mather said: "The rooms are really good and the facilities are a big improvement.

"Being able to have your own room and your own space to go back to after work is a lot better."

New blocks are being built with the environment in mind – the latest building incorporates a rainwater harvesting system which uses underground storage tanks from which the recycled water is used to flush toilets.

The DIO has also handed over new buildings on the Cornish airfield to the helicopter squadrons that will use them as their new base.

Working with Debut Services, the DIO delivered the second phase of a major construction project to provide new hangars and improved facilities for the four Sea King squadrons at Culdrose.

SAR unit 771NAS moved in to their new home last December, with 849, 854 and 857 NAS following on.

The new facilities have been designed to also accommodate the larger Merlin aircraft which will take over when the Sea Kings are retired from service.

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Sea change...

THE pound sterling is a floating currency, so the Royal Mint marked a maritime anniversary by throwing a £2 onto the sea.

The UK's official coin manufacturer (a role it also undertakes for around 60 other countries) marked the 500th anniversary of the Tudor warship Mary Rose's maiden voyage with the floating coin at the spot the ship sank in the Solent in 1545.

As far as Royal Mint officials could tell, it was the first time in the organisation's 1,000-year history that they have floated a coin, albeit a three-metre replica.

The flotation of the giant coin, a reproduction of the £2 coin released by the Royal Mint earlier this year, was overseen by Alexzandra Hildred, a member of the original diving and excavation team at the Mary Rose Trust, with the assistance of the Royal Navy's Fleet Diving Squadron *(see right)*.

The ship was raised in 1982 and work is currently under way on the construction of a new home for her close to HMS Victory in Portsmouth Historic Dockyard.

In addition, 1,511 commemorative precious metal versions of the coin have been struck in 22 carat gold, reflecting the year of the Mary Rose's maiden voyage.

The coins have also been struck in sterling silver and pristine, uncirculated versions are available to buy in limited numbers.

To mark the event, a silver Mary Rose coin was donated by the Royal Mint to the Mary Rose Museum.



Lt Cdr Richard Watson, Chief of Staff at the Fleet Diving Squadron, said: "Not only does the Mary Rose play an important part in Britain's military history, but the story of this Tudor warship appeals to naval personnel and civilians alike.

"We were able to combine some of our training with this task and are proud to help the Royal Mint commemorate the Mary Rose and hope that the new £2 coin helps keep her memory alive."

See www.royalmint.com and www.maryrose.org for more details.

Rising stars of the deep

A ROYAL Navy officer has been helping to encourage engineers of the future by organising a competition at the NATO Undersea Research Centre in La Spezia, Italy.

Now in its sixth year, SAUC-E 11 saw ten teams, including four from the UK, build autonomous underwater vehicles (AUVs – essentially robot submarines) to carry out a range of practical and realistic tasks in the limited visibility of La Spezia's harbour.

The event is designed to encourage students to think about underwater technology and related fields while fostering innovation and technology.

It also aims at getting young engineers and scientists to consider careers in the field – 75 per cent of each team must consist of student members, and teams must have a faculty adviser.

NATO MCM Programme Officer Lt Cdr Nick Gwatkin not only organised the event but also carried out diving duties when AUVs 'went rogue' or simply failed to return to the surface.

The winning team came from the University of Lübeck, beating the 2010 winners from the University of Girona into second place, with the DFKI Bremen team finishing third.

Heriot-Watt University (Edinburgh) also made the final five.

Screen saver

A DVD of the final visit by HMS Campbeltown to her namesake town in Kintyre has been produced which will help to support a historic cinema.

The Picture House celebrates its centenary in 2013, and plans have been made for an extensive conservation programme which will ensure the architectural gem continues to provide family entertainment into a second century.

The DVD contains more than 150 files of photos, documents and video clips of the frigate's visit in March, before she decommissioned.

The DVD can be ordered by post at a cost of £12, including p&p, from David Mayo, Bellgrove, High Askomil, Campbeltown, PA28 6EN, with cheques made payable to "CCB Centenary Project".

Black Cats dazzle, come rain or shine



SUMMER – the season of barbecues, music festivals, air shows... and fickle weather.

Last year saw blue skies over Cornwall for the Culdrose Air Day – a relief after the wind and rain of 2009...

...while the organisers of Southport Air Show 2010 had to call off the second day as foul weather put paid to any plans for flying displays.

Roll on 12 months, and Culdrose was back to damp and drizzly, while Southport (not quite 12 months on) managed dazzling sunshine and six-figure crowds.

There was still flying possible at the one-day show in Cornwall.

The Red Arrows had to scratch because of low cloud, but the Royal Navy's Sea King, Lynx and Merlin helicopters still took to the air, as did a veteran Catalina flying boat

The Navy's Black Cats Lynx display team proved a big hit and the Breitling Wing Walkers thrilled the crowds, as did O'Brien's Flying Circus, featuring the erratic attempts by 'the world's oldest pilot, Capt Boogaloo' to land a light aircraft on a moving platform.

There was plenty to keep visitors occupied on the ground as well, including field gun runs, motorcycle displays, static vehicles and aircraft, stalls, entertainment and that summer show staple, face painting *(a rather spectacular example of which is pictured left)*.

As we said, it was not quite 12 months since the last Southport Air Show, as organisers brought it forward by several weeks in the hope of better weather.

And their gamble paid off when near-perfect conditions attracted a total attendance estimated at over 100,000.

The Red Arrows did manage to get airborne for this show, sharing the skies with other RAF stars including a Spitfire, Lancaster and the awe-inspiring Avro Vulcan delta-wing Cold War bomber.

But *Navy News* understands that once again the precision display by the Lynx of the Black Cats stole the show, although they were run close by another World War 2 veteran, the Fairey Swordfish biplane of the RN Historic Flight.

Cdr Pete Hoare, CO of 702 Naval Air Squadron, was flying in one of the Lynx at the show.

He said: "As a member of one of the crews it is up there as one of the most memorable flights I have had in a Lynx.

"To see the Swordfish airborne, an aircraft that served with such success, is a real privilege.

"The modern Fleet Air Arm is equally busy on operations around the world.

"From a quick trawl of the air show feedback forms both aircraft were very well received, and we saw that in an immediate upturn in charitable contributions."

The Black Cats were back in action the following weekend at the Sunderland International Airshow, the largest of its kind in Europe.

The free show, which takes place off Roker and Seaburn, attracts close to a million spectators each year, and with the Black Cats sharing the nickname of the local Premiership football club, there was no way the Navy aviators could fail to please.

The crowds also got a chance to see the RN's Merlin, while once again the Vulcan XH558 provided a breathtaking spectacle as it roared over the North Sea.

With so many people to entertain there was an extensive programme of displays and attractions on the beaches and beyond, including the Royal Marines Commando Display Team and Sea Cadet units.

River-class patrol ship HMS Severn also put in a brief appearance on the Saturday – having called in at South Shields for a routine crew change and resupply, the fishery patrol vessel sailed south to sit just off Seaburn Lighthouse, close to the air display flight line, and demonstrated a typical maritime security patrol with a live commentary.

There are still a handful of opportunities to catch the Black Cats before they finish for the season, including Guernsey (September 8), the Luchtmachtdagen at Leeuwarden in the Netherlands (September 16-17), the Sanicole International Air Show, Belgium (September 18) and the Duxford Autumn Air Show (October 16).



● *The view from a Sea King cockpit during Culdrose Air Day*

Picture: LA(Phot) Nicky Wilson



● *A Black Cats Lynx performs at the Culdrose Air Day*

Picture: LA(Phot) Joel Rouse



● *One of the Black Cats' Mk 8 Lynx accompanies the Fairey Swordfish to the Southport Air Show*

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A FORCE FOR GOOD

A huntin' we will go

FROM hunting mines to walking foxhounds – it was a challenging change of scene for ten sailors from HMS Collingwood when they cycled over 1,200 miles to all 13 affiliated Hunt towns across England and Wales.

The aptly-named WO1 Pony Moore, whose brainwave the charity ride was, said: "The Second Sea Lord's enthusiastic speech about the RNRMC at the Warrant Officers' Conference was inspiring – so one man's inspiration became another man's challenge.

"I decided there and then I would undertake a fundraising activity, and knowing that my shipmates at the Mine Warfare Operational Training Centre would also be keen, the MW Charity Riders were born."

The challenging route followed a clockwise path around England and Wales from HMS Collingwood in Fareham to Cattistock, Dulverton, Berkeley, Brecon, Ledbury, Atherstone, Quorn, Middleton, Hurworth, Brocklesby, Bicester, Cottesmore, Chiddingfold and finally Gunwharf Quays.

The diverse team was made up of serving personnel, veterans, reservists and civilians, with each day being split into four legs for a two-person team to tackle in a relay.

After a busy day's ride the team spent the evenings renewing old friendships with the hunts and making new ones with the hounds. Some also volunteered to conduct early morning hound walks, which involved taking 102 old English foxhounds out for exercise.

The climax was to cycle back through the old main gate of HMS Vernon in Gunwharf Quays to be met by family, friends, charity representatives and Cdre Tim Lowe, Commanding Officer of HMS Collingwood.

After crossing the finish line, CPO 'Pinta' Beer said: "From start to finish the team spirit and determination of the MW Charity Riders has been awesome.

"The Hunts have been really welcoming hosts and the generosity they have shown towards us and the charities has been beyond our greatest expectations. The team are keen on taking on a tougher challenge in 2012 so watch this space…!"

The team raised over £2,000 for the RNRMC and Project Vernon, the scheme to put a permanent memorial to the former Diving and Mine Warfare School in Gunwharf Quays in Portsmouth.

Also raising money for Project Vernon was a team of seven swimmers from the Minewarfare and Clearance Diving Branches, who swam the 13 miles around Portsea Island.

Wearing wet suits and brightly-coloured hats, the team set out from Eastney beach in the morning, swimming north alongside the Eastern Road and past HQ Navy Command on Whale Island.

At Gunwharf Quays they were joined by 12-year-old Ella Hamza, who has cystic fibrosis and is training for the Paralympics. Ella joined them for the swim back to Eastney.

The team, Lt Cdrs Richard Watson, John Beavis, Micky Beale, Lt David Armstrong, WO(D) Steve Vernon, CPO(D) John Ravenhall, CPO (MW) Anthony Beer and former CPO Diver David Bond, were raising money for the Vernon Project; the Portsmouth-based charity Cystic Fibrosis Kids of Portsmouth, and the RNRMC.

For progress and information about Project Vernon, visit the website at www.vernon-monument.org



Ian's close shave

CLUBSWINGER Ian Rooney had a close shave with a senior officer after he organised a boxing match with a charity auction.

One of the lots in the auction was the chance to shave the head of an un-named Physical Training Instructor – and it proved quite popular.

The winning bid of £40 came from the Commanding Officer of HMS Raleigh, Capt Steve Murdoch.

Then it was a case of choosing which lucky PTI should have the haircut.

Ian, 32, currently serving at Britannia Royal Naval College in Dartmouth, said: "After the auction there was a selection process to decide who would have their hair cut and I drew the short straw."

Capt Murdoch swapped his job at the helm of HMS Raleigh to carry out the task personally. HMS Raleigh's parade ground became the barber's shop and members of the establishment's PT department were keen to lend a hand.

Capt Murdoch said: "I did think that some people would bid more for this particular lot and that maybe the PT staff would gang up and outbid me. But that didn't happen and I've now paid my £40, the cheque has been cashed and therefore I was entitled to carry out the haircut."

Commenting on his handiwork, Capt Murdoch continued: "LPT Rooney is very brave to put himself up for this to raise money for charity and to put his trust in me to cut his hair knowing I have never cut anyone's hair before.

"He deserves a big thank you for putting himself forward in this way and for ensuring the RNRMC benefits."

And Ian's reaction to his new grade one haircut?

"I've had better haircuts. But it's for a good cause and hopefully it will have grown back by the time I'm back in Liverpool to see my family."

Kent's peaks and troughs

WHEN HMS Kent received an invitation to Seafarers UK President's Appeal at Buckingham Palace, hosted by the Duke of Edinburgh, CPOET Gary Wilson was one of the lucky ones who went.

And Gary was so impressed by the charity's staff that he decided to embark on his own fundraising drive.

He explained: "Imagine my delight when I discovered that Seafarers UK were offering the charity challenge of a lifetime, by climbing 24 peaks in the Lake District in just 24 hours. Thus the gauntlet was laid down!

"At 0535 HMS Kent's 24 Peaks team – myself, WTR Richard Tomes, WO2 Simon Jessop, PO Richard Lea, LET Mick Vincent, LS Chris Butcher – set off in horribly wet and windy weather, to begin Day One of this mountain marathon.

"Ahead of us was leg one of our 31-mile trek across the Lakeland Fells, with the monstrous peak of Red Pike, standing at 2500 feet, looming in the early morning mist.

"If there was ever a reminder that we were embarking on one of the toughest mountain challenges, then this was it.

"The ascent of Red Pike was arduous with the wind and rain never abating. Once upon the summit, we no longer had the protection of the mountainside and we set out across the ridge, conquering High Stile and High Crag before heading for the might of Hay Stacks and the halfway point of Day One at Great Gable, standing tall at an impressive 3,000 feet.

"We marched on through the mist and fog towards the highest point in England, upon Scafell Pike. As we reached the summit at 3,200 feet, there were tantalising glimpses of the beauty of the Lake District as we were teased by tiny breaks in the clouds.

"From here, we set off for Esk Pike and finally Bow Fell, where we began our descent to the finish of Day One. We dropped over 2,600 feet in 2.3 miles, and it felt like at eternity as our already battered knees took a massive pounding.

"We crossed the finish line of Day One, where hot drinks and the smiling faces of our support team and event organisers awaited us, in a time of just 12 hours. We had walked 18 miles and bagged ten of the 24 peaks, in conditions that were less than favourable, and now looked forward to getting our heads down for a few hours before beginning Day Two.



● *Finish of the challenge: WTR Richard Tomes, WO2 Simon Jessop, PO Richard Lea, CPO Gary Wilson (LS Chris Butcher and LET Mick Vincent out of shot)*

"Setting off on Day Two at 0500 we ascended Red Screes, a climb of 1,100 feet in half a mile. Though we could barely see 60 feet ahead of us, we reached the summit in 45 minutes, our morning warm up complete!

"We knew that once Red Screes was conquered, the rest of Day Two would not be so arduous; well, that is what we thought…

"Having bagged Dove Crag, Hart Crag and Fairfield, the weather then took a turn for the worse making some of the scree paths impassable, this was particularly evident as we approached Dollywagon Pike.

"We had to take an alternative route, meaning we had to climb 900 feet over a distance of 1,700 feet, almost a one-in-two slope. The elation of conquering such a challenging peak was so staggering that the feeling remained long after our descent from Dollywagon.

"Heads down and hoods up we crossed marsh and moor, ticking off Nethermost Pike, the mighty Helvellyn, Lower Man, Whiteside and Raise, before approaching the last three challenging peaks of the Dodds, Stybarrow, Watson and Great.

"The driving rain had reduced our visibility further, leading to some crafty compass work and exceptional team work. We knew the end was near and that only spurred us on further.

"My knees were especially battered at this point, and I had to resort to the use of our emergency walking poles to enable me to make our slow descent to the finish line at Cockley Moor Woods.

"As we descended from Great Dodd and crossed Matterdale Common, the weather cleared and we glimpsed our first view of the staggering beauty of the Lake District, but more importantly, our first view of the finish line.

"Our mood lifted considerably at this point and despite the pain I increased the pace of the team. We crossed the line to rapturous applause an hour later, finishing in a time of 8 hours and 25 minutes, having bagged 14 peaks over 13 miles.

"We had done it, 24 peaks, 31 miles, a total ascent of 13,133 feet, all in 20 hours and 25 minutes, the fastest of all ten teams that took part.

"We'd made it to the end, thanks to the support of each other and the wonderful staff at Seafarers UK and Global Challenge UK, to say nothing of dogged determination of the team and in my case a lot of ibuprofen."

Gary added: "HMS Kent was proud to represent the Royal Navy as well as our ship, and all our friends and family. We have raised £1,200 for Seafarers UK so far and urge you to help us reach our £5,000 target by the end of September 2011.

"Please donate to this very worthy cause, which helps all serving and retired seafarers and their families, at our JustGiving website: http://www.justgiving.com/Gary-Wilson555."

Ups and downs of tough bike ride

A 20-MILE bike ride sounds innocent enough, but the annual "Petersfield Ups and Downs Ride," is a bit of a killer. The clue is in the title - the ride has a lot of downs, and some gruelling ups.

Warrant Officer 'Mac' McKenzie and Chief Petty Officers Andy Bibb and Dan Janicki, all from the Weapon Engineering Training Group in HMS Collingwood, decided to take on the route, which starts and ends in the town's market square, to raise money for the RNRMC.

The riders met up in Petersfield and made their way into the main square to check in and check out the competition.

Andy said: "Eventually over 500 riders were crammed into the square, ranging from the professional cyclists aiming to complete the full 30 miles, through to the families taking part in the five-mile fun ride around town.

"By 1000 the first batch of "elite" riders were lining up on the start line and the countdown began, 500 voices counting down from ten, as the horn went off the first riders were given a rousing send off to Queen's *Bicycle Race*.

"Next up was the Collingwood group with an equally loud send-off, down the High Street and off up the main road towards the A3."

The riders quickly spread out over the first couple of miles with Dan and Mac swiftly making their way up the pack already overtaking some of the "elite" riders who set off a good five minutes before them.

Once out of town the route took them out in to the South Downs North of Butser Hill, with Andy commenting: "Little did we know what was in store there, past the villages of Weston and Ramsdean before heading South to the far side of Butser Hill and one very long, slow and hard climb to the top!

"As we fought to make it up the hill at little more than a snail's pace, sweat pouring off our foreheads, we would pass the odd sign offering encouragement to keep going and how far was left to go."

At the 16-mile mark the roads were slowly beginning to ascend and the three found themselves riding through the picturesque woodland of the Queen Elizabeth Country Park before dropping down into Buriton.

In what seemed like no time at all they had passed through Buriton, headed back up the main road into Petersfield and were cycling up the High Street lined with well-wishers cheering them on to the finish line.

Andy said: "In total we raised £50 in online donations with as yet an unknown amount in cash in the donations box. Myself along with Dan Janicki and others are hoping to raise more for the RNRMC by taking part in the Robin Hood Marathon in Nottingham later this year."

news in brief

■ TICKETS are now on sale for this year's British Military Tournament at Earl's Court in London on December 2, 3 and 4.

With over 700 people taking part, including active combat servicemen and women and musicians from RN, Army, RAF and US Army bands, plus skilled historical American Civil War re-enactors, this promises to be a spectacular event. There are matinee and evening performances, so it is suitable for all the family.

Last year's event sold out quickly, so go to www.britishmilitarytournament.com to book. Money raised will go to the RNRMC, the Army Benevolent Fund, the Soldiers' Charity and the Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund.

■ CHRISTMAS planning is starting early for a team raising money for wounded Royal Marines and their families.

The organisers, who include Gordon Summers, the father of Royal Scott Summers who was killed in Afghanistan in February 2007, will be pulling a sledge from London to Brighton to raise funds and Christmas presents for Royal Marines' children who have lost their fathers.

On the same weekend, proud mums of Royal Marines currently serving in Afghanistan will be running stalls across Sussex and Kent. To get involved, visit the website at http://www.wix.com/commandoraid/how-royal-marines

■ CPO MARK Baxter and PO Richard Hemstock will be swimming the Channel this month to raise funds for charities including the RNRMC and Endometriosis. The two will cycle from London to Dover, swim the Channel, cycle from Calais via Normandy to Cherbourg where they will lay a wreath, and then catch the ferry to Portsmouth and cycle back to London.

See their website: www.swimmingthechannel.co.uk for more details.

■ SCOTT Jamieson, a PO Medical Assistant from RNAS Yeovilton, and POMA Stuart Campbell ran 47.1 miles from Weymouth to Lyme Regis along the SW Jurassic Coast Path to raise money for the Forces Children's Trust. They have very nearly reached their target of £3,000. To donate, go to: www.virginmoneygiving.com/ScottJamieson

■ A ROYAL Marine Land Rover battled it out with 60 classic cars on the Isle of Wight to raise the profile of the RNRMC.

The Land Rover, from RNAS Yeovilton, was taking part in the Historic Endurance Rallying Organisation Summer Trial, which saw cars from all over Europe meeting 60 classic yachts.

■ SGT Alex Robertson, an MOD policeman at Clyde Naval Base, is preparing to climb Mount Kilimanjaro next year in aid of Macmillan Cancer Support.

Alex, 43, was diagnosed with cancer two years ago but has made a good recovery and is currently hitting the local hill and mountains in preparation for his big climb. Visit his website: www.justgiving.com/alex_robertson1600 for more details.

■ A TEAM from Gallagher Security Management Systems raised over £4,800 for the RNRMC in the Three Peaks Challenge, in memory of work colleague Chris Marsh, who served in the New Zealand Navy and died last year.

■ FORMER RM Colour Sergeant Pen Farthing and his wife, Lisa, founders of Nowzad dogs charity, were invited to be guest speakers at the RBL annual conference to raise the profile of their charity, which raises money for stray and abandoned animals in Afghanistan and Iraq. See www.nowzad.com for more details.

■ RNAS Culdrose is holding a 'Party in the Park' music festival at the Kingsford Venue, Flambards, Helston, on Friday September 9 at 3pm in aid of the Royal British Legion and Help for Heroes. Email culdrose-band@mod.uk for more information and tickets.

Hoofing Stour paddle

ON August 1 2010, Royal Marine Adam 'Ads' Brown was killed whilst serving with Alpha Company, 40 Commando Royal Marines in Sangin, Afghanistan.

His uncle Mike Crankshaw – a former Naval man – writes: "This left our entire family utterly devastated. Adam was a consummate Royal Marine, liked and respected by all his oppos, but he was also a family man who had married his childhood sweetheart Amy, just eight months before he died.

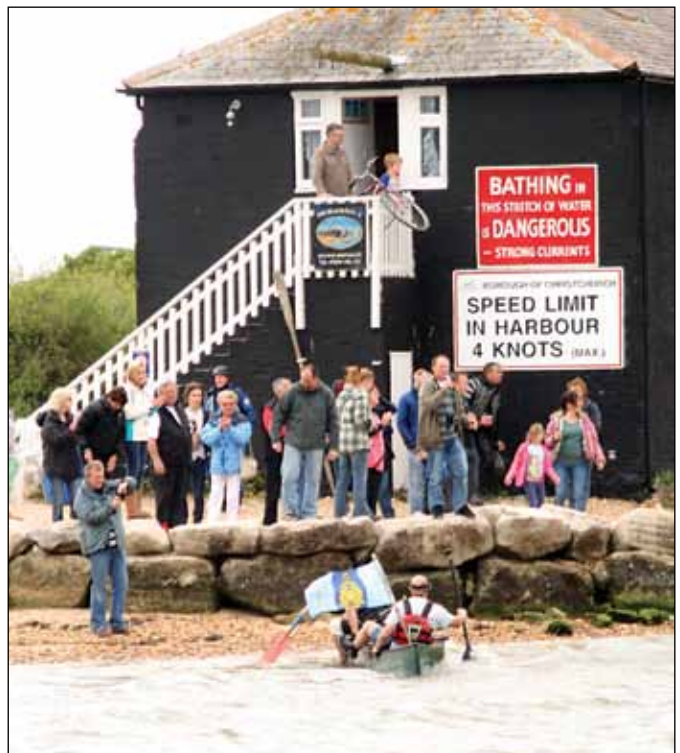
"In the months following his death, trying to keep busy, our family threw itself into raising money for the Royal Marines Charitable Trust Fund.

"It was during this time that Amy, and Jenny, Adam's mum, came up with the idea of raising money in order to buy a beach hut on Mudeford Spit in Dorset.

"Once adapted it could be used by injured Royal Marines and bereaved families for holidays, relaxation and reflection.

"Adam had fallen in love with 'The Beach Huts' during family holidays as a child, and his ambition was to one day buy one. Our target is to raise the £150,000 necessary to buy and adapt a beach hut in his memory."

Mike and James Brown, Adam's younger brother, came up with the idea of paddling the entire length of the River Stour from its source at Stour Head to its end at Christchurch Harbour.



● *The River Stour Paddle, in memory of Mne Ads Brown, is raising money to buy a beach hut for use by injured Royal Marines*

With help and support from family, friends, wellwishers, landowners, local media – and 10 Landing Craft Squadron RM – James and Adam completed their trip in under four days and have already raised well over £4,000.

See the website: www.adamshoofinghut.com for photos and the full story.



Scaling the heights with Scott and Travis

NINE Royal Marines from HM Naval Base Clyde's Fleet Protection Group have raised over £10,000 for charity by helping a blind man scale the heights of Ben Nevis.

Scott Cunningham became the first blind man to climb Britain's highest mountain with his guide dog, Travis, earlier this summer and the Faslane Marines were with him every step of the way (*pictured top*).

Col Sgt Bill Rodgers, of Fleet Protection Group's S-Squadron, explained: "Fleet Protection Group got involved around four years ago when one of Scott's friends who is an ex-Royal Marine asked if we could support him on the West Highland Way.

"Our Commanding Officer and Regimental Sergeant Major were happy for the unit to help and since then we have supported Scott in all his charity work and helped him raise £100,000 for Guide Dogs for the Blind.

"The Ben Nevis climb took seven hours to complete – four hours up and three hours to get back down."

Because of the level of support received from the Royal Marines last year, the Travis Trek charity is now collecting money jointly, with half going to Guide Dogs for the Blind and half to the Royal Marines Charitable Trust Fund (RMCTF).

"So far we have managed to raise £10,000 for each charity," continued Colour Sergeant Rodgers.

"We hope to collect over £25,000 from this year's Travis Trek Gala Ball, an event we will be holding on September 24 at the Crowne Plaza Glasgow."

A host of Scottish celebrities have already signed up for the ball, including Ally McCoist and the Glasgow Rangers Management team. Some of the Rangers first team players, Sky Sports' Jim White and golfer Peter Lawrie will also be attending.

Visit www.legendsterk.co.uk for details.

Sandown sailors set for Scottish swim

SEVEN sailors from the Faslane-based First Mine Counter Measures Squadron were bracing themselves to face the icy waters of Loch Lomond as *Navy News* went to press, when they set out to swim over 22 miles in aid of Canine Partners.

The team, led by MCM1's Commanding Officer, Cdr David Bence, planned to begin their marathon dip at Ardlui and end it several hours later at Lomond Shores, Balloch.

Canine Partners, which helps people with disabilities to gain more independence with the help of specially-trained assistance dogs, is a favourite charity of the Squadron, which raised enough money with a sponsored bike ride last year to pay for the first year of training for Xylo, a golden retriever.

Cdr Bence said: "We were thinking of ways we could top last year's target and it was suggested that we undertake a charity swim. We are attempting it in relays - something which has never been done before for the Lomond swim."

He added: "We did as much swimming as our busy programme allowed while deployed to the Arabian Gulf over recent months.

With the team now back in the UK, we are taking advantage of the swimming pool at the Naval Base's Sportsdrome to get in shape, as well as training in the loch to get used to the open water and the low temperature."

Some members of the MCM1 team have already put in early training, as after Armed Forces Day at the end of July, they headed to Loch Ness for a training swim. Happily there no was sign of the monster.

To donate, or find out more about the team, visit the webpage at www.justgiving.com/mcm1

We're all off to Wembley

THREE SAILORS from NATO headquarters in Northwood are going to walk from Cardiff to Wembley carrying the match ball for this month's England v Wales football match.

The three, WTR Mikey Paddock, CPO James 'JC' Cameron-Wood, and PO Andy 'Gibbo' Gibbs will be covering between 24 and 26 miles a day along quiet country roads and busier A roads before arriving at Wembley with the ball that the players will kick off on September 6.

The walk will be a milestone for Gibbo, as the start will see him pass the £100,000 he has raised for Help for Heroes by organising and taking part in a series of events, such as walking across Scotland in 2008, walking the circle in 2009, visiting his ship's affiliated city of St Albans, visiting football grounds and shaking a collecting bucket at Essex County Cricket Club.

All this has been done in his own time whilst maintaining a busy role on an operational ship and now at the Maritime HQ.

The three are sponsored by Essex Auto Group, with accommodation sponsored by the Holiday Inn hotel chain and Wetherspoons, and the Sugar Loaf pub in Little Chalfont.

Donate at www.bmycharity.com/walktowembley

Johnnie Walker is last man running

WHEN HMS Iron Duke wound up in the Mediterranean after nearly six months in the Gulf, her ship's company decided to mark the event with a flight deck marathon.

Starting in the cool of the day at 0600, the frigate's CO, Cdr Nick Cooke-Priest, set off 27 runners to attempt the full marathon – 183 laps of the upper deck – or the half, 92 laps.

To prevent any knee strains the siren was sounded every hour to change direction. Of the 27 runners, 14 were from the Weapon Engineering Department, led from the top by their stand-in WEO, Lt Cdr Paul Thomson, who finished a half in a respectable two hours five minutes.

POET Roy Fenwick ran comfortably with the DWEO, Lt Simon Hearnden, for the first 11 miles before turning on the gas for the last two miles to make sure that he finished first in front of Sub Lt Peter Thompson in a time of one hour 44 minutes.

The event was hijacked by the buffer, PO Dan Powditch, who ran ten miles in a once-only sea survival suit and life jacket, raising money for the Seafarers' UK Charity and managing to achieve an astonishing one hour 52 minutes.

Lt Hearnden, Lt Johnnie Walker, CPO Simon Hanson and CPO John Headridge were the only runners who set out to run the full marathon.

CPO Hanson managed 14 miles before the constant pounding on a metal deck became too much, Lt Hearnden managed 20 miles before cramped legs prevented any further running, CPO Headridge almost finished but had 15 laps remaining before a sore knee stopped him continuing.

This left Lt Walker running on his own, surviving on pure grit and determination, finishing in a very respectable four hours 11 minutes.

The monies raised will go to Macmillan Cancer Support and Hull Women and Children's Hospital.





Cultural expert held key position

HMS ALBION embarked a wide range of specialists, from intelligence officers and a dentist to logistics coordinators and amphibious operations planners, for the Cougar 11 deployment.

However, one augmentee on the flagship of the Rapid Force Task Group flagship was particularly special.

Reservist Lt Cdr Shah Esfahani *(above)* was appointed to the staff of Commander UK Task Group (COMUKTG) as Cultural Advisor.

Drawn from the RNR's Information Operations branch, Lt Cdr Esfahani is one of only two cultural advisors in the Royal Navy, and Cougar 11 marked the first time either has been deployed in this role at sea.

Having spent four years working as the chief linguist for HQ ISAF in Kabul, his knowledge and experience were much in demand as the task group undertook a series of exercises with partners in the Gulf region.

Added to that was the fact he is fluent in Farsi and Dari, with a good working knowledge of Arabic.

Cdr Tom Guy, COMUKTG Chief of Staff, said: "Our wider regional engagement is critical to the UK's influence in a part of the world which is essential to the UK's own security and prosperity.

"To have someone on my team who understands the culture and speaks the language has been absolutely invaluable."

The primary role of the Cultural Advisor – or CULAD for short – is to provide advice on religion, culture, customs and habits practiced in countries visited by the Royal Navy.

RN units frequently deploy to areas where sailors and Marines are exposed to different cultures and languages, working with partners and facing opponents with different perspectives to their own in environments that may have little in common with what they are used to.

Lt Cdr Esfahani – who first joined RNR training unit HMS Wildfire at Northwood in 1989 – said: "My role isn't about changing our culture in the Royal Navy or the UK.

"My task is to make Service personnel aware of the other religions, customs and behaviour, and in doing so provide a climate of mutual understanding and respect.

"If there is a requirement for being dressed modestly, then the ship's company need to be told in advance to bring appropriate clothing for when going ashore.

"Likewise if there are restrictions on drinking when ashore during a specific period, then they need to know so as not to have high expectation or indeed to avoid breaking the country's rules.

"In fact it goes both ways as I'm also the main point of contact for providing advice to embarked foreign guests and VIPs on the rules, regulations, conduct and protocols whilst on board Her Majesty's ships."

And with several key Gulf states taking part in bilateral exercises with the task group, the presence of a Muslim officer as Cultural Advisor onboard a Royal Naval warship will certainly not have gone unnoticed...



● *Reservist Lt Roy 'Dusty' Miller on deployment during Cougar 11*

Cougar demands civilian specialists

THE recently-completed Cougar deployment was not simply a chance for the Naval Service to demonstrate its flexibility and amphibious capabilities through the Response Force Task Group.

Within the main programme were a handful of cameos by Maritime Reservists, each showing just what they can bring to the show when they temporarily swap their civilian careers for a stint in a dark blue suit, as well as what they can take back with them.

Take Forward Logistics Site Commander Lt Roy 'Dusty' Miller, from Hyde in Chester.

A member of the RNR Logistics branch, Dusty is director of a Manchester-based logistics company specialising in importing new empty plastic bottles and buckets from all over Europe and selling them to a wide range of customers including pharmaceutical, agrochemical and food customers.

"My civilian colleagues love it," said Dusty.

"I have them all trained in Navy slang and we recently painted the warehouse blue and grey to capture a nautical theme."

But on Cougar 11 Dusty managed a small team of logistics personnel deployed to foreign ports to support the task group through the movement of personnel, mail and cargo.

"I am totally convinced that I bring my civilian skills into my naval role" said Dusty.

"Being an officer in the Royal Navy is not too dissimilar to being a manager, but I think because of my civilian background, my style of leadership is less military and this can be refreshing at times."

Dusty added: "It gives me a massive sense of job satisfaction and self worth – something which is not so common in the civilian world."

The importance of such people was recognised in the recently-published final report by the Future Reserves 2020 (FR20) Independent Commission, which recommended the consideration of new roles for Reservists and adjustments to the balance between Regulars and Reservists.

The Commission identified the ideal figures of trained Reservist manpower required by 2015, with a suggested rise from 1,900 to 3,100 for the Maritime Reserve.

Which will mean more opportunities for personnel from a huge range of disciplines – people like Lt Alec Harper, an investment manager from London.

"I couldn't turn this one down," he said. "The opportunity to serve on the Royal Navy's flagship doesn't come along every day.

"With everything going in North Africa and the Middle East, this felt like a chance to contribute to something that mattered."

Cougar saw more than a dozen reservists join for periods ranging from a couple of weeks to several months, setting aside careers in fields such as accountancy, the oil industry and politics for roles supporting amphibious warfare, media operations and logistics.

This was not merely a bunch of spare hands backfilling roles at home, but individuals providing niche specialist capabilities and expertise to front-line operations.

David Bayntun's 'day job' is in the MOD in London where the civil servant is responsible for helping to enforce fishery protection legislation.

But at the end of March David sailed from Plymouth on board assault ship HMS Albion to take up a place in the ship's cutting-edge Combined Operations Room, from where the ship can direct operations at sea, on the land and in the air.

As a watchkeeper, David was part of the team which helped oversee the complex task of directing movements of people, landing craft and helicopters to and from shore, known as Ship to Objective Manoeuvre (STOM).

"My role is a bit like that of an air traffic controller, only we have to worry about boats as well as aircraft and we operate in a potentially hostile battle space," said David.

"Our task is to make sure the Royal Marines and their equipment arrive on the beach in the right order, at the right time."

Colleague Lt Richard Turley, a business consultant from Wirral, worked for the ambulance service for almost ten years, including two years as a control room officer.

"I remember at the time of the Millennium celebrations we had numerous competing emergency calls at the same time and only three minutes to dispatch an ambulance," he said.

"It was all about multi-tasking and prioritisation, which is the same as working as a Royal Navy watchkeeper."

Lt Col Richard Reardon RM, HMS Albion's Amphibious Operations Officer, was in no doubt of the benefits of having reservists on his team.

"The RNR is key to enabling my team to operate for an extended period of time," he said.

"Reservists are probably among the most useful augmentees one could wish for. They step in, do the job and step out again, without spending a huge amount of time training.

"Many of them bring skills with them from civilian life – I've had reservists who work in air traffic control, with the emergency services and in the commercial maritime sector, and they bring a different perspective to the role."

Another key player was Lt Jeremy Olver, who has worked in the House of Commons as a researcher for MPs and believes his RNR experience can give him an edge over civilian colleagues.

"A lot of people complain that people in politics are increasingly professional and have little experience of the 'real world'," said Lt Olver, whose tasks included hosting a team of national media on board HMS Ocean for the first Apache strikes against pro-Gaddafi forces in Libya, and staging major press conferences.

"I value being a reservist because it gives me that appreciation of how things are outside London, which can be something of a bubble."

New masters of the science of defence

DEFENCE is a handy, catch-all term, but it fails to reflect the complexities of structure and context.

In order to study defence in that way you would need plenty of time – say, 46 weeks on a world-class Masters-level course.

You would also need a good cross-section of UK and overseas perspectives to add depth – maybe just shy of 300 people representing almost 60 countries, including the top ten per cent of the officer cadre from the UK.

Clearly there would need to be a good Naval Service contingent, maybe from 56 Royal Navy/Royal Marines personnel.

You would need top figures in their field to give such studies a rigorous academic and practical foundation – people like former Foreign Secretary Lord Hurd, Prof Hew Strachan, the Chichele Professor of the History of War at Oxford University, and writer and communicator Alastair Campbell, people with unrivalled experience or who have made their mark at academic centres of excellence.

And you would need to look at military, political and international links with the military, how defence works alongside other Government departments as well as civilian organisations and industry.

There is even the need to examine how defence works within its own field, including single-Service, joint and combined operations.

A tall order? Well, just such a course recently ended at the Defence Academy of the UK at Shrivenham in Wiltshire – Advanced Command and Staff Course Number 14, which was designed to prepare officers for high-grade appointments, in part by developing their command, analytical and communication skills and providing a broader understanding of defence.

Undertaken in partnership with King's College London, the course attracted students from as far afield as Australia, Japan and China, allowing students (and accompanying families for international candidates) to understand more about each other's military, culture and backgrounds.

Three of the Naval Service students finished the course as prize-winners.

Lt Col Rich Cantrill MC RM took the Naval Review Prize as best joint maritime student; Cdr James Parkin won the Curtiss Prize for Campaigning; and Lt Cdr David Turner took one of four KCL Cormorant Fellowships and one of five Commandant's Commendations.

The course is challenging, with students pitting their skills against students from equivalent staff colleges in France, Germany, Italy and Spain, studying campaigns from as far back as the 15th century as well as considering what future conflicts may look like in a mixture of lectures, workshops, discussions, debates, table-top exercises and external visits, all culminating in formal assessments, exams and a 15,000-word research paper.

One Naval student, Lt Cdr Fiona Percival, said: "I have gained a much better understanding of political, economic and military issues and how they fit in the wider global picture.

"I have particularly enjoyed the interaction with our fellow international students who have brought a fresh perspective to the initiatives and issues within their countries and within their militaries."



MPGS provides a military option

A NAVAL senior rate holds a key personnel post in the Army – and could have just the answer for sailors made redundant who would like to remain in the military.

PO(WS) (AWW) Leigh Bishop *(above)*, currently in his last year of service, is on a tri-Service detachment as Senior Personnel Selection Officer for the Military Provost Guard Service (MPGS), part of the Adjutant General's Corps.

PO Bishop is no stranger to working with the Army and RAF, having completed a tour as the MPGS SNCO recruiter at Worthy Down in 2003-05, then deploying to Iraq.

After a two-year draft on board HMS York he looked to get back into the tri-Service environment, and applied once more for the MPGS post.

With redundancies looming across the Forces, the MPGS is a real opportunity for Service personnel who have to leave but wish to remain in the military.

The MPGS offers a full regular career in the Army enabling sailors, Royal Marines, airmen, soldiers and reservists to reap the benefits they once had, by employing many of the skills they have learned in the Forces.

Benefits include Service accommodation – where available – medical and dental cover, a military pension and education allowances.

Potential MPGS soldiers would have to have served a minimum of three years in any of the Services or reserves, be medically fit and have at least a Very Good conduct assessment on discharge.

Once serving, they can enjoy the security of a three-year rolling contract up to the age of 55, with a second pension to top up previously-accumulated time.

The MPGS operates at more than 100 locations across the UK, providing armed guards at sites where Service personnel normally live and work.

This includes:

- Controlling entry and exit access to a site;
- Managing control room operations and ensuring all visitors are dealt with efficiently;
- Patrolling site perimeters and taking necessary action to preserve perimeter security.

Dog handling opportunities are also available.

Among the Naval Service establishments which use MPGS personnel are Arbroath (RM Condor), RNAS Culdrose, HMS Raleigh, Britannia Royal Naval College, the Commando Training Centre RM Lympstone, Portsmouth and RNAS Yeovilton.

PO Bishop is a big fan of what the Army has to offer – so much so that he is considering applying for one of up to 700 posts which could become available when he leaves the Senior Service next year.

"You can enjoy all the benefits the Service has to offer – soldiering with stability whatever your prior service," he said.

Medics afloat – and drill at sea...

SUPPORT to Royal Navy deployments comes in many guises – and not all of them universally welcome...

Take the dedicated medical support for the Cougar 11 deployment, the scheduled element of which ended early last month, and Operation Unified Protector off Libya.

Nobody wants to call on the services of a surgeon or dentist, but if an emergency occurs, then at least the Servicemen and women at sea are in capable, highly-qualified hands.

Embarked in helicopter carrier HMS Ocean is a surgical team drawn from across the UK, mainly comprising RN doctors and nurses with a handful of Army and RAF personnel making it a unique Joint Service organisation afloat.

Although primarily there to provide surgical support in the event of an incident involving the Apache helicopters, the team could also be called upon to provide assistance to any of the NATO ships, submarines or aircraft engaged in enforcing the UN Security Council Resolutions.

Back home, the Servicemen and women of HMS Ocean's surgical team work within the six hospitals spread around the country that have military units attached to them, where the bulk of their work is involved in treating civilian NHS patients.

However, whilst fully integrated into these hospitals they also keep themselves up to date with military training and advances in medical practice.

Flexibility is key, though, as when the call goes out they need to be prepared to drop everything and deploy abroad, sometimes to environments in which they are not familiar.

RAF Cpl Suzi Smith, An Emergency Department nurse from Peterborough, has never served at sea before – her only previous experience of the sea has been a cross-Channel ferry.

"This is far bigger and yet more restricted than I was expecting," she said.

"I may be in the RAF but I have never worked so close to the runway before.

"The noise of the helicopters on deck is a constant accompaniment to the work in Sickbay immediately below."

For veterans of the field hospital at Camp Bastion in Afghanistan, Ocean is a welcome break – no sandstorms, no dust in the operating theatres, though the heat is still a factor as compartments in the ship can get hot and humid in the North African sun.

The team provides expertise in the important areas of trauma resuscitation that need to be started within two hours of an incident taking place, so RN consultants in emergency medicine, surgery and anaesthetics lead the team.



● *Surg Lt (D) Suzanne Coward at work on board HMS Albion*

Picture: LA(Phot) Luron Wright

Consultant anaesthetist Surg Cdr Shane McCabe, from Bournemouth Hospital, is on his last deployment before leaving the Navy after 19 years.

He has decided to concentrate his professional efforts closer to his young family at home, and hopes to set up a restaurant with his wife.

"When the call came for this I was about to start a sommelier's course, but now I am here," he said.

"One thing I have learnt through my Naval career is the need to keep flexible."

PONN Claire Williams, the Duty Senior Critical Care Nurse at Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Birmingham, spends a lot of her time with military casualties evacuated from Afghanistan, but said she was glad to be working on boar a ship – "This is what I trained for."

RN WO2 Beccy Hatch is the team's biomedical scientist, providing blood tests and cross-matched blood for emergency transfusion.

"We have all been thrown together at the last minute but it's great to see how well the team have gelled.

"We have been busy training with the ship's Sickbay staff for trauma emergencies and integrating with the rest of the team onboard HMS Ocean. Morale is high."

Vascular surgeon Surg Cdr Peter Taylor, the Officer Commanding the surgical team, is pleased with how the deployment is going.

He said: "In the last two years, a lot of the medical lessons learnt from Afghanistan have informed developments in how surgical resuscitation for trauma has been delivered on board ships.

"The team has been expanded to 12 people and provides more expertise in the areas of emergency medicine and intensive care.

"We now have a mobile digital X-ray machine on board which has proven so helpful during deployments on land in Afghanistan.

"So if we did need to patch anyone up here, they can be confident that they will receive the very highest standards of care."

The medical expertise which available extends to oral health – not top of the list of considerations when looking at the Royal Navy's contribution to the campaign off Libya, but a vital element of the overall care package for the original 3,000-plus people who deployed on the 11 ships on Cougar 11.

Cougar 11, and the subsequent change of roles for elements of the Response Force Task Group, has been a significant deployment for Royal Naval Dental Services.

"As well as reinforcing the operational value of dental care to a deployed population, the Cougar 11 deployment demonstrates the ability of Defence Dental Services to provide dental care to front-line operations to the same standards as a shore establishment and, in this case, to a task group deployed at sea for an extended period," said the Director of Naval Dental Services, Surg Capt (D) Richard Norris.

His high praise is due to the work of the dental teams deployed onboard HM Ships Albion and Ocean and with 40 Cdo Royal Marines.

Surg Lt (D) Suzanne Coward and Dental Nurse Lianna Forder were on board flagship HMS Albion – their first deployment at sea in their professional roles.

They joined the ship in Crete at the end of April and not only provided dental care for Albion but have also seen patients from five ships, plus embarked bootnecks.

"I find the Royal Marines always turn up for an appointment on time without any fuss," said Surg Lt (D) Coward.

"Sailors can be a little more elusive, but the great thing about being a dentist at sea is that people can only avoid you for so long.

"There are some challenges too. If you break equipment you either have to fix it or do without it.

"It also takes a long time for dental work to get back from our UK dental lab.

"I had one patient who broke his denture soon after we sailed – unfortunately he had to wait seven weeks before it finally caught up with him."

DN Forder, who joined the Royal Navy in October 2008, said: "My Dad was in the Merchant Navy and my Mum is a dental nurse.

"I wanted to travel but I also wanted a secure job, so joining the Royal Navy as a dental nurse seemed the obvious way of doing both.

"It also gives me a skill which is useful in civilian life too."

From the small dental surgery on Albion's 1 Deck, they undertook all routine dental checkups and hygiene appointments as well as responding to dental emergencies, providing everything from fillings to root canal treatment – carrying out over 160 fillings and ten extractions during the deployment.

The team have everything they would expect from a shore-side surgery from an X-ray machine to a fully-functional dental chair.

"Capital ships like Albion and Ocean provide excellent platforms, but we also have a portable dental unit which we can take onboard smaller ships or take ashore to use with a Royal Marines landing force or in support of disaster relief and humanitarian operations," said Surg Lt (D) Coward.

"Some personnel spend very little time in shore establishments, so by sailing with them, we give them chance to receive not just their routine check-ups and treatment but also treatment normally carried out by a dental hygienist.

"Providing dental services at the sea is efficient. We can stop small problems escalating into larger ones.

"It is also convenient for those working onboard, making appointments time effective for departments on the ship".

Off the coast of Libya, Surg Lt Cdr (D) Ben Williams has the additional duty of looking after the dental needs of Ocean's ship's company and personnel from her tailored air group, including those supporting the Apache attack helicopters currently keeping the Gaddafi regime in check.

"While most of our work involves the provision of routine treatment at sea we are also available 24/7 to deal with dental emergencies," he said.

"This is particularly important during the current operational climate where a distracting toothache could have a severe impact on a sailor or pilot's ability to focus on a specific task.

"As well as the 750 personnel embarked on Ocean we also offer dental cover to NATO member ships operating off the Libyan coast.

"We've had patients flown over from British, Canadian and Italian vessels for treatment ranging from simple fillings and denture repairs to tooth extractions.

"The opportunity to help personnel from other navies is both interesting and rewarding.

"They are always impressed with Ocean's dental facilities and are very grateful for the assistance we are able to offer."



● *Medical augmentees, HMS Ocean medical staff and USAF personnel test procedures for moving a casualty from the helicopter to the emergency room*

Ocean pictures: LA(Phot) Guy Pool



● *The surgical team in HMS Ocean continually exercise to keep them honed in the event of an emergency. Here they practice moving a 'patient' – a volunteer from the embarked air group*

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High stakes... and deep seas

WHEN HMS Iron Duke completed the 'last' patrol of Gulf oil platforms this spring after nearly a decade's constant vigilance by the Royal Navy, we had a sneaking suspicion the word 'last' might be premature…

And so it proved as HMS St Albans arrived in the Gulf.

Except that the Portsmouth frigate found herself safeguarding different platforms – not the familiar KAAOT and ABOT terminals at the tip of the Gulf.

The Saint was Britain's participant in a major exercise testing the abilities of naval forces in the region to defend these vital structures at the southern end of the Gulf, with US, UAE, and Saudi military among others combining for the week-long 'Stakenet'.

Stakenet's an annual exercise run under the banner of Combined Task Force 152 – the Bahrain-based maritime force responsible for security at sea in the entire Gulf.

The emphasis is on MIP – 'maritime infrastructure protection', namely ensuring the security of the oil rigs and gas terminals which pepper the 97,000 square miles of the Gulf from the shores of Kuwait and Iraq to the sands of the United Arab Emirates.

For the Saint, it was the first real test since she arrived in the Gulf following an eventful 7,000-mile journey from Portsmouth which saw her Merlin pluck 13 mariners from a stricken tanker (more on that later) before the frigate took part in an anti-submarine exercise involving HMS Turbulent among others.

Turbs is on an extended tour of duty east of Suez (circa ten months) gathering intelligence as only Trafalgar-class submarines can do and working with Allied navies...

...among them the Americans, who dispatched the destroyer USS Mitscher to join St Albans and her 829 Naval Air Squadron Merlin in the hunt for Turbulent.

Although St Albans is in the region to support security and safety on the high seas, it's important that she doesn't forget the reason she was built in the first place: sub hunting.

So the workout with Turbulent helped to "fine-tune our anti-submarine tactics," in the words of the frigate's Commanding Officer, Cdr Tom Sharpe.

"The lessons learnt here will further enhance our ability to protect the vital shipping routes in the Middle East and serve as a reminder to all that we must ensure that hard-earned anti-submarine warfare skills are not allowed to perish."

Some Saints were given the chance to experience life in the other vessels partaking in the exercise.

A few lucky ones joined the Mitscher by sea boat...

...and one not-so-lucky chap (a certain Tom Sharpe) was winched aboard Turbulent by Merlin – a pretty tricky and rather ungainly manoeuvre, requiring consummate skill from the team in the cockpit and on the boat's con – to discuss tactics with his Silent Service counterpart Cdr Ryan Ramsey.

Once all the Saints had returned to the relative comfort of the Type 23, the frigate knuckled down to her Gulf mission and immediately switched from tracking down submarines to protecting oil rigs.

"Stakenet is the first opportunity we've had to work alongside our partners in the region and we've been very impressed with the task force as a whole," said the Saint's operations officer, Lt Cdr Will King.

"Its ability to work together and defend these vital installations has been excellent and the success we've had in Stakenet indicates that as part of CTF 152, St Albans is well positioned to contribute security and stability in the Gulf."

During operations off Iraq, we repeated time and again the importance of the KAAOT and ABOT facilities to the country's economy – generating well over 80 per cent of the nation's income.

After the fall of the Saddam Hussein regime, Royal Navy vessels conducted regular patrols of the terminals to protect them and train Iraqi sailors and marines to defend them...which they're now doing.

Important as the Iraq platforms are, however, statistics for the wider Gulf show how vital this part of the world is to the global economy: experts reckon as much as 30 per cent of the globe's energy demands are met by the region's resources.

As far as the UK is concerned, gas accounts for more than a third of its energy needs – with a substantial proportion of that gas being supplied by Qatar in liquefied form and transported in gigantic tankers to specialist facilities, including a huge complex at Milford Haven.

So the Telic mission which ended in the spring with the Royal Navy's pull-out from Iraq has become a broader maritime security mission throughout the Gulf, with St Albans the first to slip into the new role.

"Although only two months into our deployment a great deal has already been achieved. And now we are in the Gulf itself, our ability to 'reach out' in this area which, in maritime terms is actually quite small, has been significant," said Cdr Sharpe.

"'Influence', 'deter', 'reassure', 'protect' are the words that define our mission in this critical part of the world. Putting them into practice is proving challenging and rewarding in equal measure and it is hoped that both ours and the wider Royal Navy presence here will have a lasting effect."

The bulk of the work so far is 'alongside assurance' – explaining to the myriad and varied mariners in the region the work of the Senior Service and Allied navies to tackle issues such as smuggling, terrorism, people trafficking and other nefarious activities on the high seas.

As St Albans nears the half-way point in her six-month tour of duty, the ship whose crew she saved as the deployment began – the tanker MV Pavit – rather eerily reappeared on the world stage.

The vessel did not founder, but instead drifted across the Arabian Sea for four weeks – undetected, despite these being among the busiest waters in the world – and ran aground on Juhu Versova beach in northern Mumbai at the end of July.











The future starts here

HE or she may not know it, but somewhere out there is a potential Royal Navy pilot about to be recruited to fly the F-35C Joint Strike Fighter, who in 2032 could be Commander Air in the new Queen Elizabeth-class aircraft carriers, and could even command the ship in the future.

As the build of the two new carriers continues apace, detailed long-term plans have already been drawn up to train naval personnel after a 40-year gap in operating a conventional carrier.

Building upon the Royal Navy's previous expertise in STOVL (Short Take-Off, Vertical Landing) operations with the Sea Harrier, key officers, senior rates and ratings will be selected to form the core of the ships' companies.

They will begin a programme aimed at gaining experience in all aspects of carrier operations over the next seven years with support from the United States Navy and the French Navy.

All the future carrier's departments are included, and the plot is so detailed that even the yet-to-be-selected Commanding Officer of HMS Queen Elizabeth has a training slot identified for 2014.

Capt Dickie Payne, who leads the Carrier Strike Programme at HQ Naval Command, said: "These are exciting times.

"One of the Navy's current fast jet pilots will be Commander Air in 2018, having gained experience flying the F18 off a carrier with the US Navy; a pilot recruited this year will have the job in 2032."

He added: "We already have an RN liaison officer in the Pentagon as a new appointment – Capt Ade Orchard, former CO of the Naval Strike Wing, began working there in June to act as the UK focal point for developing carrier operations alongside the USN."

Capt Payne added: "The train has left the station.

"If you want to be part of this exciting programme to deliver for the UK '65,000 tonnes of diplomacy' to support our nation's aims worldwide, then start engaging with your career manager now."

As *Navy News* reported in July, the First Sea Lord has already signed a formal agreement with the US Navy to train Royal Navy pilots on the F/A-18 Super Hornet for the new carriers.

One pilot is already at sea deployed in the USS John C Stennis.

Other formal agreements will follow, and the whole package of skills needed to operate the ships will be honed with help from the US and French navies.

Three RN pilots are already going on exchange with the French Navy, having recently completed six months of language training.

Both these navies operate the catapult launch systems which are the chosen methods for the British carriers but which the Royal Navy has not used since the mid-1970s.

The First Sea Lord, Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope, and the US Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Gary Roughead, emphasised the importance of the whole package of carrier skills when they met in London in June.

At a UK/US Heads of Navy briefing, Admiral Stanhope said the initial agreement would pave the way for several others, covering every element of carrier operations.

He explained: "The decision is clear – we are going for the catapult launch and arrestor-wire flying from Queen Elizabeth-class, by the end of this decade.

"We've got a lot of work to do to make sure we're going to able to achieve this.

"We've got to prepare the deckhands, the engineers, the catapult operators, the arrestor-wire operators, the command control and the air traffic control – it's a massive challenge and something we haven't done since the late 70s.

"We're going to need to leverage off both our American allies and our French allies to be able to achieve this in a timeframe.

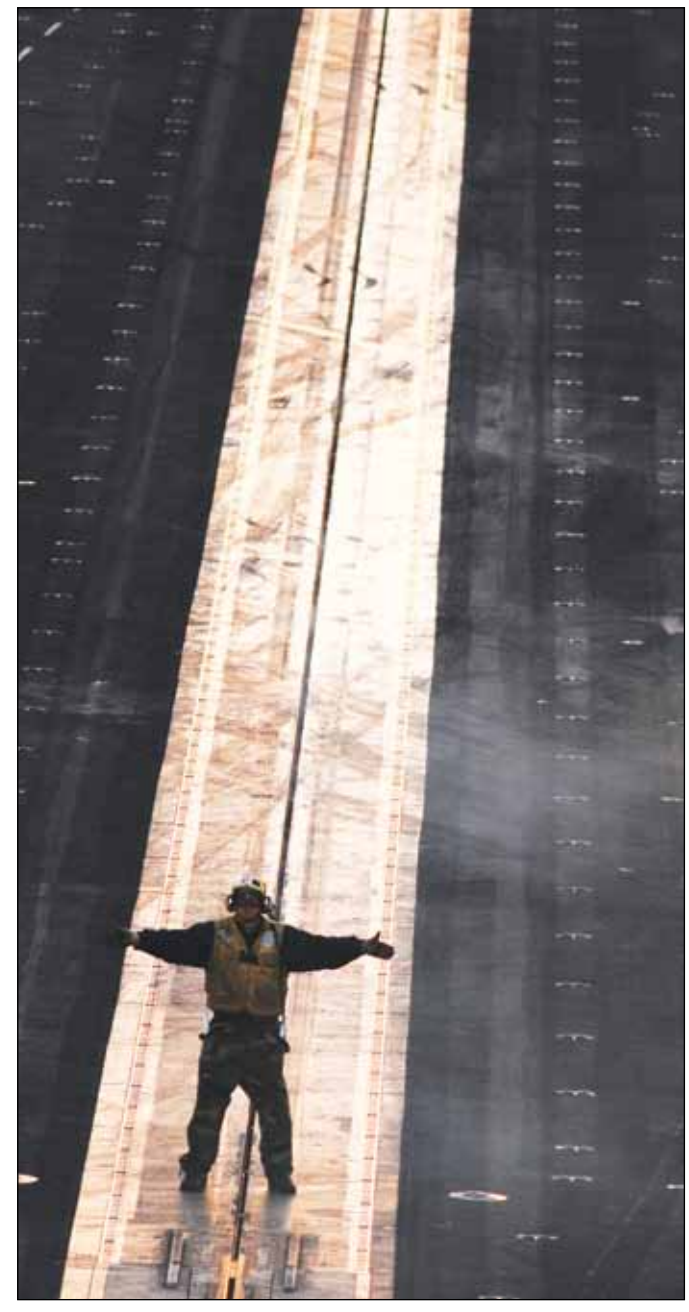
"And by we I mean we, the Royal Navy, and we, the Royal Air Force.

He added: "People get fixated about preparing the pilots.

"Of course we've got to prepare the pilots, but, as the Chief of Naval Operations says, how many people does it take to fly an aircraft off an aircraft carrier?

"It takes 5,000, which is the complement of one of their carriers.





"Ours will have a smaller ship's company, but every single one of those people has got to be focused on the delivery of that fast aircraft or any other aircraft that is generated from that deck and you've got to prepare those people."

Admiral Roughead said: "I love my pilots dearly but it's the 19-year-olds, the 20-year-old that's working the flight deck, the young maintenance technician who has to work on an aeroplane in a very confined space – that's carrier aviation.

"We tend to be captured by the aeroplane which is the weapon that we use, but it's that entire enterprise that gives a country, whether it's the US or the UK, the ability to put it where it wants it to be without having to ask anyone's permission, and to use that capability in the best interests of the nation."

He added: "That to me is what carrier aviation is about.

"It really is an extraordinary investment that a nation makes in having an aircraft carrier capability."

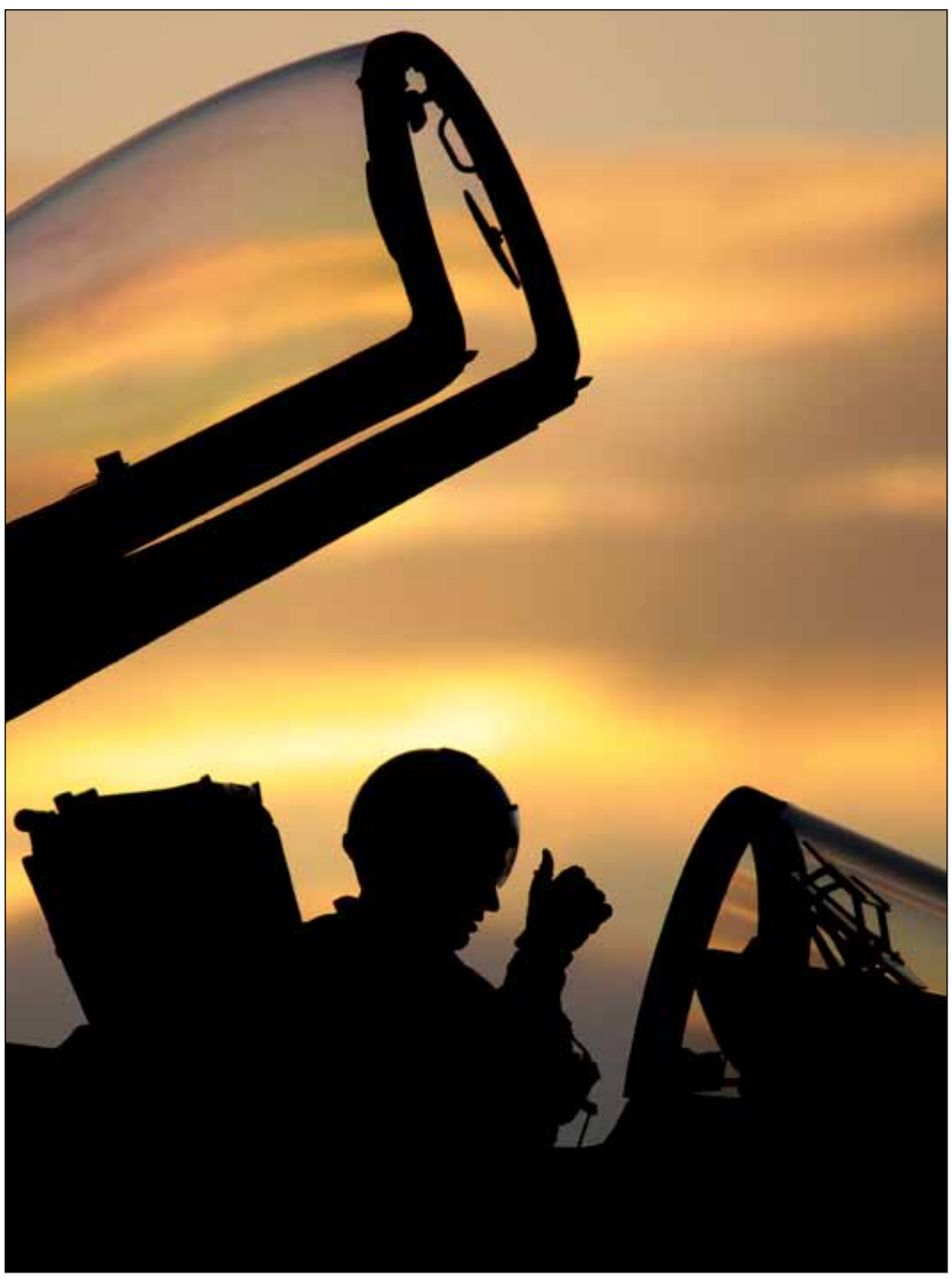
The Queen Elizabeth-class aircraft carriers are expected to be in service for 50 years, serving the UK's interests and exploiting the freedom of access granted by operating upon the high seas.

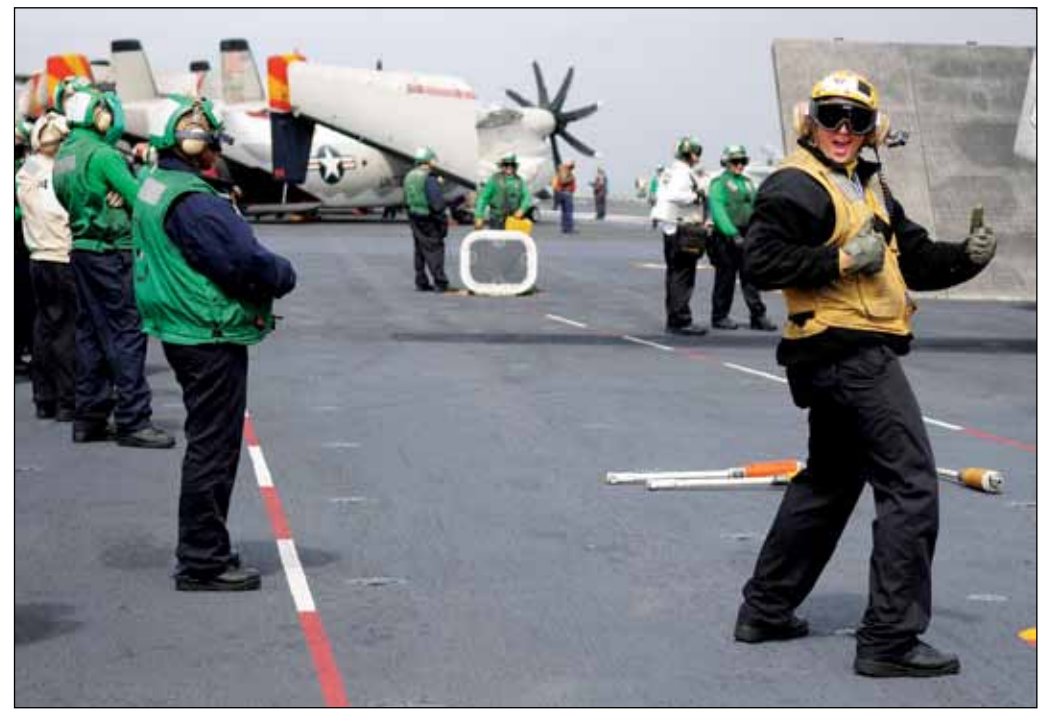
Other nations recognise the flexibility and the unique attributes of aircraft carriers.

The Chinese Navy is conducting sea trials on their new carrier, the rebuilt Russian Varyag, Brazil is generating a carrier capability once more and India is looking at which future aircraft they will fly off their new carriers.

● *Clockwise from top right: a Super Hornet is brought to a halt by the arresting gear on the flight deck of the USS George H W Bush; the catapult director cons an aircraft on to the catapult; an aircraft handler grabs his moment of fame on the carrier's flight deck; thumbs-up from a Super Hornet pilot before launch*

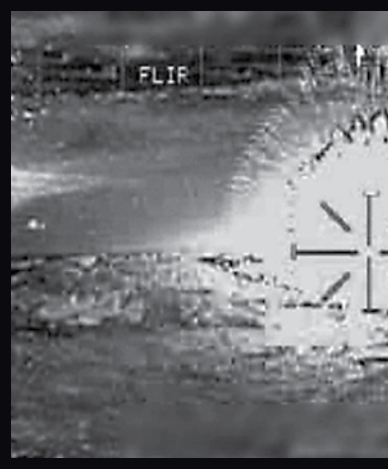
Pictures: Lt Richie Moss











In at the





pictures: la(phots) keith morgan, frpu east, and guy pool, hms ocean

QUEER kind of war, as the great William L Shirer once observed.

A month ago you're hunkered down for the long run, patrolling up and down the coast, being engaged by – and engaging – coastal batteries, with no end in sight to a bitter conflict.

Four weeks later, you're off the coast of Tripoli trying to keep track of events which change by the minute as the regime crumbles and rebels enter the suburbs of the Libyan capital.

And still the tyrannical government refuses to give up...

For as rebels skirmished on the outskirts of Tripoli, a small Maltese ship tried to enter the harbour to ferry evacuees to safety – only to come under fire.

Minutes later it reeled away from the capital, still under way, but struggling to manoeuvre.

The stricken ship was spotted by HMS Liverpool, which was carrying out a surveillance mission off Tripoli at the time, and the Royal Navy vessel immediately offered assistance.

The Portsmouth-based destroyer threw a line to the stricken craft and towed her to open waters so she could return to Malta safely under her own steam.

With the good deed done, Liverpool resumed her mission monitoring fast-flowing events ashore.

ALL of which were probably hard to predict when we left Operation Unified Protector – the NATO codename for the Libyan mission – last month.

Rewind four weeks and the Crazy Red Chicken had temporarily pulled out of the line, the ship and her men and women enjoying a two-week break in Taranto in southern Italy after almost unceasing operations off Libya.

Stepping up to the gunline *in absentia* were HMS Iron Duke and, during the second week, her sister Sutherland.

Like Liverpool and Iron Duke before her, the Fighting Clan was called upon to clear her guns and send iron greetings to Gaddafi.

But aside from hammering land-based targets with high explosive shells or illuminating the coastal zone with star shells, there's a less dramatic – and less publicised – side to the NATO mission: the arms embargo.

Under the auspices of UN Security Council Resolutions 1970 and 1973, NATO ships have been keeping a close eye on Libyan-bound maritime trade since the end of March.

Indeed, some 200 vessels have been boarded by NATO forces as a result of that dragnet.

The electronic Automated Identification System provides initial information about a ship – speed, cargo, destination.

The dragnet enforcers build on that information by 'hailing' the ship over the radio and, if they're still not satisfied, send their boarding teams across to conduct a thorough search.

Which is exactly what Sutherland did with one Turkish-registered ship.

"In a highly-demanding sea state, my lads swiftly – but safely – boarded the suspect vessel and conducted a thorough search," explained Lt Viggars RM, in charge of the commando detachment aboard the Fighting Clan.

His men from the Fleet Protection Group Royal Marines – the UK's elite unit when it comes to security at sea – is backed up by the ship's Lynx helicopter and Sutherland's own Royal Navy team.

"We work very closely with the Royal Marines boarding teams in order to secure a ship, allowing us to search it safely and thoroughly," said PO Jones, one of the frigates' RN boarding party leaders.

"Although, like always, there is a fair bit of banter between the Royal Navy and Royal Marines boarding teams, we always work professionally together and combined, give Sutherland a formidable asset ready to go at a moment's notice."

Once the sailors and commandos had completed their thorough search of the merchantman and were satisfied that everything was in order, they returned to Sutherland, allowing the civilian ship to continue on its way.

Even better, the boarding times were back on the frigate just in time to see England beat India in the cricket...

JUST as Sutherland was getting into the swing of things in the Gulf of Sirte, it was time to head for home and hand the reins back to Liverpool...

...which promptly let rip with her most potent barrage of the campaign to date.

Nearly 60 rounds of high explosive shells hammered Col Gaddafi's forces in a day of high drama for HMS Liverpool, whose guns silenced the enemy yet again – and smashed up a military convoy.

The veteran destroyer came under fire from coastal batteries near the port of Zlitan as she carried out a night-time mission with NATO forces.

She'd been ordered by a patrol aircraft to fire star shells over a suspected pro-Government position when a shore battery began lobbing shells at Liverpool.

After pulling back briefly from the danger zone, the destroyer was ordered in once more to resume her illumination mission – only to be engaged once again.

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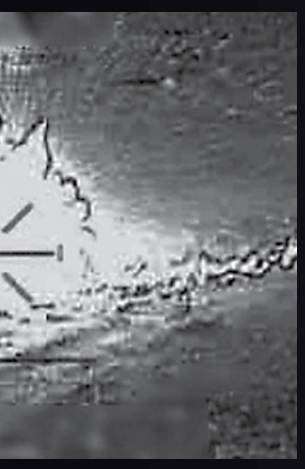
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death

nemy shells hit home, plosive rounds left the yer's 4.5in main gun at sound – and promptly addafi battery.

e day, a patrol aircraft convoy moving along rrying ammunition and ront line.

order, "4.5 – engage!" Liverpool's operations explosive rounds were the column of vehicles, seriously damaging

chaos on the ground, d in and halted the the remaining vehicles

n bay teams worked the continuous supply gun," said Liverpool's er, Cdr Colin Williams. ensured the success nd the protection of the of Libya."

tion against the vehicle led the number of high nds the ship has fired yan mission at a stroke. ugust 22 (the day the s team pressed the big t' button), the destroyer ed up 95 days on patrol nce leaving Portsmouth t three in every four - not bad for a ship laid n 33 years ago).

An extra 29,446 e clock.

e has required 20 pe 42 destroyers compared with ships) while the ition expended n re-stocked on

5 Naval Air s spent 158 hours rol, while the fighter os room have spent 280 TO aircraft during their ke missions over Libya. e think that Unified ey shoot, Liverpool has tions on no fewer than hours in all) and been forces eight times.

Britain's oldest warships – and the most potent e nation's arsenal: HMS rmy Air Corps Apache

, images of a strike by ave been declassified e which, obviously, we

Like Liverpool, the Apaches were called upon to eliminate a troop concentration.

Unlike Liverpool, however, they had to fly deep into Gaddafi-held territory to get at the vehicles.

The gunships launched from Ocean, crossed the coast and flew some 40 miles inside Libya while RAF Tornadoes providing air defence and Fleet Air Arm 'Bagger' Sea Kings – also launched from the Mighty O's flight deck – keeping an eye out for movements by land or air by pro-Gaddafi forces.

The Apaches' destination was Al Watiyah, some 85 miles southwest of the Libyan capital, close to the Tunisian border and, more importantly, the site of a massing of vehicles.

When the gunships had finished their work – using Hellfire air-to-ground missiles and the helicopter's 30mm chain gun – 12 vehicles, including one armed with surface-to-air missiles, and a headquarters had been destroyed, while four other vehicles were badly damaged.

The raid on Al Watiyah was part of a series of co-ordinated British strikes under the banner of Unified Protector.

RAF jets were dispatched to Tripoli harbour where they bombed a Koni-class frigate; the vessel was damaged in a previous NATO raid, but intelligence assessments suggested it still possessed some fighting strength.

By the time the Royal Air Force had finished with the ship, it had suffered serious damage, especially forward, and was taking on water.

In other strikes by Ocean's fearsome gunships, vehicle checkpoints have been eliminated near Zlitan, as have buildings in the town used by Gaddafi's forces including a former hotel which had been turned into a military base.

In these and other NATO operations, said Maj Gen Nick Pope, spokesman for Chief of the Defence Staff General Sir David Richards, the Airborne and Surveillance Sea Kings – better known as Baggers throughout the Royal Navy – had provided crucial support.

Indeed, Prime Minister David Cameron said all British Service personnel could look back on the six-month campaign with a sense of achievement.

"This has not been our revolution, but we can be proud that we have played our part," he stressed.

And it is a part which is still being played; there was intense fighting in districts of Tripoli as *Navy News* went to press.

And if the fighting subsides, Mr Cameron warned against complacency.

He pledged that British forces would remain committed to the mission to protect Libyan civilians "for as long as needed".



COMMENT



● *Dreadnought at her launch in Barrow on Trafalgar Day 1960*

Clean living in Dreadnought

I HAVE just read *Nothing Short of Exemplary* by Richard Hargreaves (June).

To say that I am surprised at the conditions on board HMS Tireless would be a bit of an understatement.

I spent nearly five years on the Dreadnought as what is now known as a 'Backafty.' I would have thought that conditions would have improved since I left the Dreadnought in November 1968.

We never hot-bunked, we kept watches on the normal three-watch system with a split dog watch.

We were not limited to the number of showers we were allowed as we had two Evaps on board which produce more than enough fresh water, consequently nobody stank and it never smelt like the old diesel boats I was on prior to joining Dreadnought.

Thanks to four carrier air-conditioning plants the temperature was kept at about 18 to 20°C for'd of 44 bulkhead and back aft in the (labelled as the American sector) machinery spaces.

I don't ever remember it going above 30 degrees, even in the Far East in Singapore waters!

We did have some spare accommodation bunks in the fore ends on the torpedo racks for new joiners but life on the whole was very comfortable.

Could it be that it was because Dreadnought was an exact copy of the USS Skipjack (SSN 575) that life was so comfortable?

I really thought conditions would have improved since 1968 but according to the article things have really gone backwards.

– Bruce MacDonald Allan, ex Chief Mech, Webmaster of the Dreadnought Association, Dedham, Essex

HMS Belfast's last voyage

I WAS a child of ten when I sailed to Gibraltar with my father, E J M Bray, a boiler room artificer on HMS Belfast's last voyage in August 1963.

We left from Plymouth, went to Portsmouth and then to Gibraltar.

I have no photos but I do have my Navy pass for the trip and a Belfast ship's badge as a keepsake.

I remember a lot about this trip – the guns firing in Biscay, the Russian ship we were woken up to take photos of, watching films projected on a screen hung from the 6in gun barrels, the sailor who broke his leg when a rope snapped, the rough weather in Biscay.

– Chris Bray

A flagship, but not 2SL's

IN your article (August) about the dismasting of HMS Victory you state that she is the flagship of the Second Sea Lord.

Sea Lords do not have flagships. To be correct Victory wears the flag of the Commander-in-Chief Naval Home Command, who is also the Second Sea Lord.

– Charles Addis, Commanding Officer, HMS Victory 1982-86

Five-year criteria for Jubilee medal

I would be grateful if the Second Sea Lord's department could explain why the Queen's Diamond Jubilee medal will only be given to those with five years' service?

This presumably means that someone who has been in the Royal Navy or the Royal Marines for less than that time but has served in Afghanistan will have an operational medal, but not one to mark the Jubilee and their service to the Crown.

I must be mistaken in my interpretation, or perhaps the defence budget is so stretched that giving a medal to all those serving is just too expensive.

What about those credit card bills racked up by MOD civil servants?

Medals are the currency of service to the Crown. I suggest the MOD be asked by the RN to think again and award it to all those on the trained strength.

– Cdre Malcolm Williams (ret'd)

***Navy News** has been informed that, as might be expected and as with all medals, very careful consideration has been given to the qualifying criteria for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal.*

The Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal (QDJM) is designed to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the accession of the Queen to the throne on February 6 1952.

It is not intended to be recognition of operational service, long and efficient service, or any form of "terms and conditions of service", for which appropriate forms of medallic recognition are available.

Detailed qualifying criteria will be issued shortly but a five-year length of qualifying service criterion has been customary for previous Coronation and Jubilee medals back to the 1953 Coronation Medal at least – Managing Ed

Failure of raids into the Atlantic

THREE years ago the then Second Sea Lord, Vice Admiral Sir Adrian Johns, told me that the profile of the Fleet Air Arm needed to be addressed.

The following year was the centenary of naval aviation, last year was the 70th anniversary of Taranto.

The latter you covered in a two-page spread, however just as important, the 70th anniversary of the Bismarck sinking was not covered by *Navy News*.

Bismarck and Prinz Eugen were on Operation Rheinübung, the latest in a series of raids on Allied shipping carried out by surface units of the Kriegsmarine.

It was preceded by Operation Berlin, a highly successful sortie by Scharnhorst and Gneisenau which ended in March 1941.

The aim of operation Rheinübung was for Bismarck and Prinz Eugen to break into the Atlantic and attack Allied shipping.

With the Bismarck now sunk, Prinz Eugen abandoned her mission and headed for Brest to join Scharnhorst and Gneisenau.

In July 1941 the RAF went on bombing missions to attack the ships in Brest.

The Scharnhorst was badly damaged and underwent six months of repairs. Prinz Eugen had one direct hit, and the Gneisenau was torpedoed.

On January 12 1942, the German Naval Command, in a conference with Hitler, made the decision to return Scharnhorst, Gneisenau and Prinz Eugen to Germany.

The intention was to deploy the vessels to Norway to interdict Allied convoys to the Soviet Union.

The so-called 'Channel Dash,' codenamed Operation Cerberus, would avoid the increasingly effective Allied radar and patrol aircraft in the Atlantic.

Despite the success in sinking Hood, offset a few days later by the sinking of Bismarck, Operation Rheinübung was a failure.

No merchant ships were sunk, or even sighted, during the two-week raid. Allied convoys were not seriously disrupted – most convoys sailed according to schedule, and there was no diminution of supplies to Britain.

On the other hand, the Atlantic U-boat campaign was disrupted; boats in the Atlantic sank just two ships in the last weeks of May, compared to 29 at the beginning of the month.

The Kriesgmarine was never again able to mount a major surface operation against Allied supply routes in the North Atlantic; henceforth its only weapon was the U-boat.

I sincerely hope that next January *Navy News* honour the Swordfish aircrew that sacrificed their lives by marking the 70th anniversary of the Channel Dash.

– Trevor Walhen, Basingstoke

Why I love our Navy

ONCE Navy always Navy - how often have I heard that old saying?

It is true. A few of us members of Hanworth RNA had the great privilege of meeting the residents of Pembroke House (the care home in Gillingham owned and managed by the RN Benevolent Trust) at their Summer Fair.

What a wonderful time we all had together. Once the wheelchairs were manouevred around the tables and all were settled, the Royal Marines music kept the party going with a swing.

We soon made friends with all. The staff were busy caring for those in need, making sure they had all they needed to eat and drink.

The barbecue blazed away and RN officers made sure no one missed out, and went round picking up the empties and putting the cash into plastic bags. It never happened in my day!

Never mind, I found a young sub-lieutenant one ringer – a lady one – to be my going-ashore oppo.

Not only that but at my table I had a commander, lieutenants, a Jenny Wren and a Jolly Jack, all spinning yarns.

Luckily for me the commander was a minesweeper chap, so we did a bit of sweeping – even if it was only rubbish under the table!

Well we all had a drink together, why? Because we are all Navy, one company, one faith, serving or have served. That's the Navy I love.

– George Drewett, Shepperton, Middlesex



Each month Pussers Rum are offering to courier a bottle of their finest tipple to the writer of our top letter. This month's winner is: George Drewett

Last of the true sailmakers

I READ February's article on gangway screens while I was in hospital and wasn't able to reply, but now I'm home so here is my comment.

I was a sailmaker on board the Ark Royal, not the just-decommissioned one but the one before, and on the last commission I made the gangway screens for the Ark when she was at the Spithead Fleet Review.

I also made a second set for in harbour, painted with the ships' crests by the chief painter.

All the electrical covers were made in white drill with blue piping and the screens for the gangway were placed on the upper hanger lift-well.

The reason for screens on the gangway was for the decency of guests going onboard, attending dinners, etc.

It was interesting to read that there are bosuns calling themselves Sailmakers, as I was one of the last true Sailmakers to leave the RN.

I did a nine-month apprenticeship at HMS Victory, now HMS Nelson, in the sail loft, which included taking exams on my trade.

Since leaving the Navy I have become a member of the RNA Plymouth, having sociable fun and the occasional rum tot.

I wonder if anyone out there remembers me?

– Sid 'Sails' Elbro, Plymouth



Bicester's tin appeal

THE Training Ship Bicester, the headquarters of Willesden and St Marylebone Sea Cadets, is a converted tin tabernacle, as *Navy News* has reported.

You correctly state that very few of these structures remain. A very small number are still used for their original purpose, but we have one of the few in our parish, and it has been in continuous service since its erection.

It is St Aidan's Church, Caythorpe, Nottinghamshire *(above)*, and services are held there at least once every month.

Good luck to TS Bicester in their quest to get more support.

– Edgar Jackson, Gunthorpe, Notts

LGBT RM – or not?

I COULDN'T help noticing in August's edition that there are no Royal Marines in the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender march-past.

Does Royal have his own squad to march past, or is being gay, bisexual or transgender not allowed in the Corps?

– W Williams, Okehampton, Devon

opinion

IT'S very easy at the moment to become depressed, whether at the state of the Navy post-SDSR, or more generally at the state of the nation.

Pessimism can become a bad habit and a self-fulfilling prophecy, so it's timely to be reminded by Capt Dickie Payne, who heads the carrier strike programme in Navy Command HQ, that somewhere out there is a potential pilot about to be recruited into the Royal Navy who in 2032 will be Commander Air in one of our new Queen Elizabeth Class carriers.

Regretting past glories is a natural human reaction, but we should not let it infect the hopes and aspirations of the younger generation.

Instead of falling into regret for the past, we should remind ourselves that by 2020 not only will the Navy be operating with the new Queen Elizabeth-class aircraft carriers, Type 45 destroyers, and Astute-class hunter-killer submarines, but on the blocks will be the new Type 26 Global Combat Ships (replacing our current frigates); new RFA tankers; an upgraded helicopter fleet, and the successors to the Vanguard-class Trident submarines, which currently carry the nation's nuclear deterrent.

These are not future wishes, but a naval equipment programme to which the Government is committed.

They offer tangible proof that there is a future for the Royal Navy, and for those young people who want to join it.

The views expressed in this paper do not necessarily reflect the views of the MOD

NAVY NEWS

Leviathan Block, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth PO1 3HH

September 2011 no.686: 57th year

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This wasn't Boy Cornwell

WHILE I was extremely interested in the photograph *(right)* and letter from Tony Davie (page 26, May) quite possibly the two ratings pictured served on HMS Chester but neither is Cornwell or his brother.

The hero stood only 5ft 3in tall, was aged just 16 years 144 days at the Battle of Jutland, and looked nothing like the much older sailor with his arm on his brother's shoulder, who looks at least about 5ft 10in or maybe 6ft.

Nor did the VC holder have a brother named Bill.

Boy J T Cornwell was born on the January 8 1900, had an older brother, Ernest, born in 1897 (who because the brothers looked alike posed as a model for the Salisbury painting now hanging at HMS Raleigh) and an older step-brother, Arthur, born in 1887. Neither served in the Royal Navy.

There are two known photographs of Boy Cornwell, one as a young recruit under training at HMS Impregnable, Plymouth, in the summer of 1915, with him wearing a white cap, the other, the property of the Imperial War Museum, is the more recognisable, taken during Easter 1916 in blue sea jersey and black cap displaying the cap ribbon of HMS Lancaster.

There must have been many young sailors who wore badges of rank and cap tallies that they were unentitled to wear, to impress families and girlfriends back home.

The question has to be asked, since the photo is not of the Cornwell brothers, just who are the brother sailors?

– Eddie Summerfold, Honorary Secretary, HMS Opossum Association, Bury, Lancs



... I WAS interested to see the photograph of Boy First Class Travers Cornwell and felt he was the one seated on the left.

Over the years many has been the time I have seen illustrations of him at his post by the gun and it shows him as a round-faced person, not like the rating on the right. I might be wrong.

– Alan Clifford, Queen Camel, Somerset

An answer true to type

ONE more tale from the Falklands War before the book closes.

An administration team was sent to Ascension Island to distribute uniforms and necessary paperwork to HMS Sheffield's ship's company before arrival in the UK, so they could go directly on survivors' leave.

As a member of the team responsible for the paperwork part, I thought it would be useful if each envelope handed out contained a ballpoint pen, assuming under the circumstances there might be a shortage of such items.

When the paperwork was returned and I was sorting it into its various piles, I was surprised to find one set typewritten!

A member of the ship's company had saved his portable typewriter.

So this is one answer to the old question – if you had to leave a burning building (ship), what one item would you save?

Never sue for a fuller response than that!

– C H Lowson, Fareham, Hants

Getting in step with the Royals

I'M putting forward an idea. That's all it is; just an idea but one I'm rather enthusiastic about.

It proposes an addition to Beating Retreat when conducted by the massed bands of the Royal Marines on Horse Guards Parade.

You will have noticed how keen are watchers of the ceremony to walk *beside* the bands as they leave the show.

They keep in step, swing their arms, and have as upright a stance as they can manage, though often pretending not to be doing so.

I can see a lot of merit in making it possible for these enthusiasts to play a greater part in what's going on.

It doesn't take too much imagination to envisage them being invited to form a 'squad' behind the band, be mustered by RM NCOs, and move off in company with the band down the Mall to Buckingham Palace, and then into the forecourt of Wellington Barracks to dismiss.

The 'forming squad' could take place either before or after the band gives its final salute on Horse Guards to the Guest of Honour.

A senior RM NCO could take charge of them, first explaining briefly and quickly what is required of them, and using the parade-ground terminology that will be well remembered.

One virtue of such a change is, I suggest, increased involvement of members of the public with one of our Armed Services' most popular events at a time when there is much concern about our current defence arrangements and policies.

Another is the sheer pleasure it would give the 'squad' participants, in joining the parade, to be taken back to their Service experience of years gone by.

I do hope you like the idea yourself and can readily commend it to people planning the next Beating Retreat.

– R E Perrin, Tadworth, Surrey



Beat this for an idea...

I thought readers might be interested in this photograph.

I collected ship and squadron crests from *Navy News*, fixed them to the sticky side of fablon and placed them under a sheet of glass.

Although the camera flash has tended to diminish the colours, it is in fact a very colourful and interesting coffee table that has been much admired.

The drum was rescued from a skip!

– Steve Chinnock, ex WO, Honiton, Devon

LETTERS to the editor should always be accompanied by the correspondent's name and address, not necessarily for publication.

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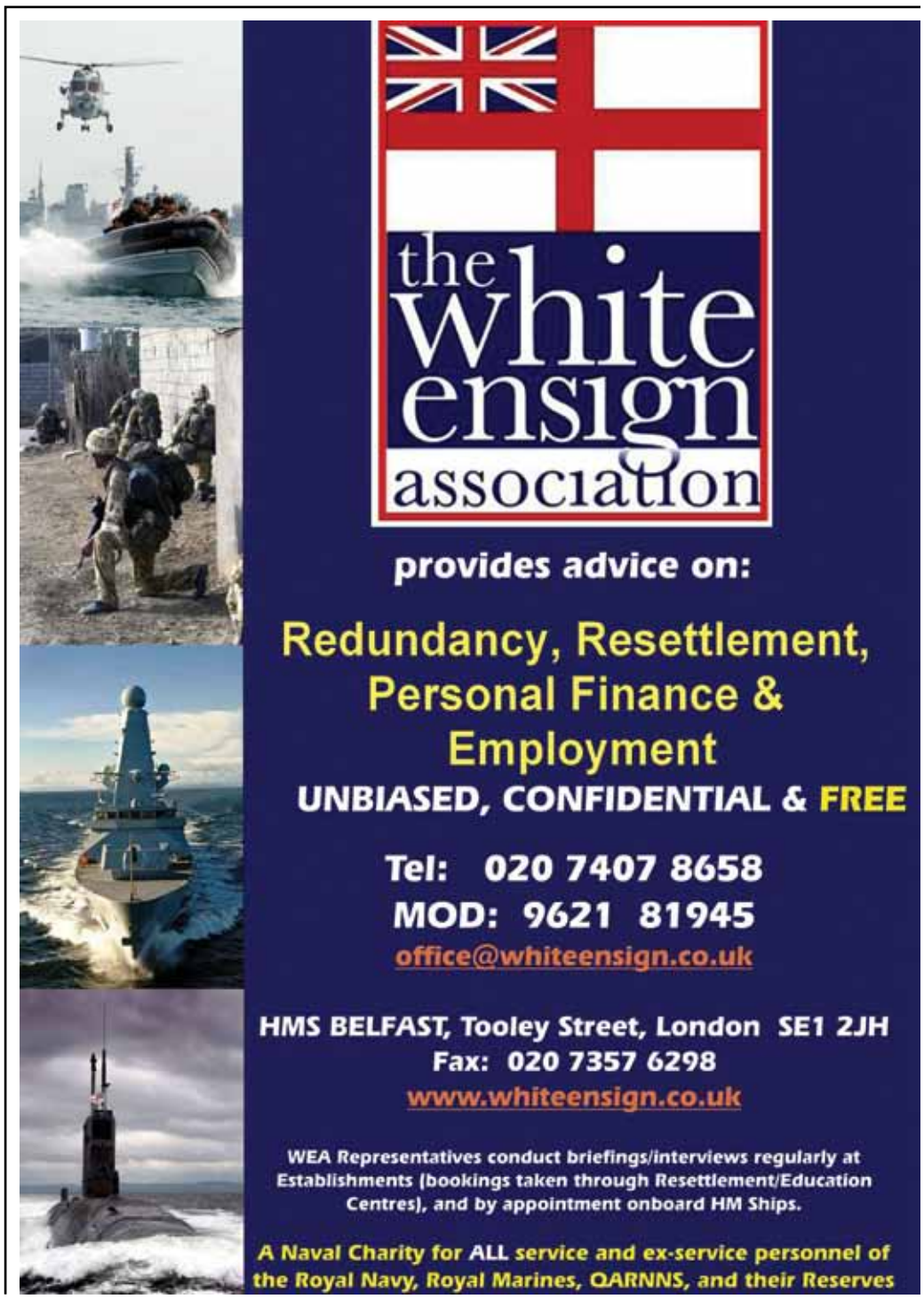


Given the volume of letters, we cannot publish all of your correspondence in Navy News.

We do, however, publish many on our website, www.navynews.co.uk, accompanied by images.

We look particularly for correspondence which stimulates debate, makes us laugh or raises important issues.

The editor reserves the right to edit your submissions.



PEOPLE

Sworn in at sea

COMMANDING the Royal Navy's largest warship off the Libyan coast still hasn't prevented Capt Andrew Betton of Holy Trinity Church, Wonston, from being sworn in as churchwarden.

With Capt Betton unable to attend any of Archdeacon Michael Harley's visitations to be sworn in alongside fellow churchwardens from around the Winchester Deanery in the usual way, ship's padre the Revd Bernard Clarke was given special permission to carry out the duty on board HMS Ocean instead.

The Ven Michael Harley said: "As commanding officer of an amphibious warfare helicopter carrier with 800 crew serving in support of a United Nations mandate, it was clear that Andrew was unable to fulfil the necessary legalities of the swearing-in ceremony.

"So we thought we should find a way to make it happen and with some work behind the scenes, we were able to secure the necessary agreements and legal requirements under 'exceptional circumstances'.

"The Bishop of Basingstoke, the Rt Revd Peter Hancock, asked the ship's chaplain to enact the admission and on the ship's quarterdeck Andrew pledged to continue his ten years' service as churchwarden during Sunday worship.

"Here is a wonderful example of the Church being able to adapt – even when it involves a Royal Navy ship on active service on the high seas."

HMS Ocean left Plymouth at the end of April as part of the NATO-led operation in support of the United Nations Security Council resolutions to protect Libyan civilians during the unrest in their country.

Capt Betton said: "Like any other serving member of the Forces home is never far from my mind and it was wonderful that I was able to be legally admitted into office as a churchwarden even whilst at sea."



● *Capt Andrew Betton*

"Wonston is a small rural parish, where the church is central to village life, and it has been a great privilege to serve as churchwarden over the past ten years, offering an excellent balance to my duties at sea.

"I am very fortunate to have the support of a strong parochial church council who ensure that everything runs smoothly during my frequent absences, whilst I attempt to keep up with the administration at sea."



Increased protection

WOMEN from across the establishments in the Portsmouth area gathered at HMS Sultan for a 'female protection session'.

The session aimed to pass on basic techniques – throws and countering attacks – that can be used to protect an individual and take the initiative away from an attacker.

The instructor for the sessions was Dennis Ward, a self-protection and martial arts instructor at the Gosport training establishment and at nearby HMS Collingwood, who brought a highly-experienced (and brave) team with him to be blocked and thrown *(see above)*.

It is hoped more such sessions can be arranged, not only giving women useful skills but also the confidence to use them.

Still in the front line, 33 years on



HE saw action in the Falklands, and nearly 30 years later Tim Trevarthen *(above)* is still taking his place in the front line.

WO1 Tim is the Military Support and Stabilisation team operator Regimental Sergeant Major in Helmand – an extremely varied tour for the veteran.

Within weeks of his deployment he was putting his medical training into practice as he tended a gunshot wound.

Tim is responsible for a small elite team attached to J Coy 42 Cdo RM in Nad-e Ali north, identifying development projects and working with the local community to make them happen and improve both amenities and prosperity, whether finding locations for water pumps or looking to erect bridges.

Tim, who has clocked up 33 years in the Navy, joined up at 16 and served in HMS Coventry in the Falklands Conflict.

He has since served multiple tours in Iraq before moving on to Afghanistan.

Admiral is VIP guest

FIRST Sea Lord Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope was Guest of Honour at HMS Collingwood's Ceremonial Divisions.

In addition to inspecting the Guard of Honour, escorted by Cdre Tim Lowe, the Commodore of the training establishment, Admiral Stanhope presented a number of awards and medals, including: British Aerospace Prize (Lt Cdr John Cromie); Armourers and Braziers' Prize (LET(WE) Grant Testi-Fraser); Admiral Rutherford Memorial Trophy (POET(WE) McCartney); Communications Rating Herbert Lott Award (LS(CIS)Mahmud; LSGC Medal (C/Sgt Long); Collingwood Officers Association Sword Citation (Lt Cdr Dusty Miller).

Serious gamer wins accolade

THE man behind a submarine safety training tool and a bomb-disposal training simulator has been awarded the MOD Chief Scientific Adviser's Commendation.

Prof Bob Stone, an ergonomics/human factors specialist, has led the development of simulation and serious games systems to train individuals in extreme situations.

These include SubSafe, an interactive 3D tool used by submariners to familiarise themselves with controls, equipment and emergency procedures – the system is of such quality it was used in the legal proceedings to demonstrate the events on board HMS Tireless in 2007 when an oxygen generation device exploded.

Bob's team also designed an Afghan village scenario to support the pre-deployment training of troops.

MI Flight lauded

THE Navy's most senior aviator, Deputy CINCFleet Vice Admiral George Zambellas, visited 815 Naval Air Squadron at Yeovilton to present a prize to MI Flight.

The trophy, commissioned in memory of the four members of HMS Portland Flight who died in a helicopter crash in 2004, goes to the flight which has contributed most to the ethos, reputation and standing of the Lynx Helicopter Force and 815 NAS.

MI or Maritime Interdiction Flight is part of the maritime counter terrorism operation.

Vice Admiral Zambellas also presented Lt Adam Prevett with his Aviation Foundation Degree in Military Aviation Studies, and an Aircrew Certificate of Competence to Lt Sam Haynes.

International slant at BRNC

THE Quarterdeck area of Britannia Royal Naval College was decorated with flags of the 22 nations represented by the international student cadre at the Dartmouth establishment.

The students manned stands displaying information about their countries and cultures, answering questions about anything and everything, from local cuisine to the insignia on their uniforms.

"During their time here at BRNC international cadets can lose something of their individual identities as they are absorbed into the Royal Navy training regime," said Les Sheppard of VT Flagship, the International Students Welfare Officer.

"International Day gave them all the chance to show BRNC exactly who they are and where they come from."

Countries from Estonia to Tonga, the Bahamas to Kenya and Malta to Ghana were represented, as were most Middle East states.

"It was really good to be able to show and talk to people we have worked alongside and been trained by, about our own countries," said Officer Cadet Nahian Milky of the Bangladesh Navy.

BRNC First Lieutenant Lt Cdr Andy Harris said the day was all about understanding and respecting other people's beliefs and ways of life.

Clyde camps

BETWEEN 60 and 70 children per week attended summer camps at Clyde Naval Base.

Over three weeks, participants in the King's Camp could try up to 25 sports, and take part in various theme days (the beach, Disney, inside-out being examples), while parents could join in on Fridays.

Sponsorship by companies and charities meant children of base staff enjoyed the facilities for just £60 per week.



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● *From left, Mne Will Richardson RM, Pte Eleanor Richardson (Int Corps), LS Lorraine Richardson RNR and Mr (formerly Sgt) John Richardson (RAF)*

Family's full house

THE Richardsons are probably as close to the total military family as you will get.

Not only have the four of them clocked up almost 50 years of service to Queen and country, but they each represent a different Service or fighting arm.

Mum Lorraine is a Leading Seaman with 14 years behind her in the RNR, first as a communicator then as a War (Sea) Res FPT – Force Protection Team.

She has just returned home from nine months mobilisation with the regulars in the Gulf as part of P Squadron Fleet Protection Group RM (FPGRM)

She also spent nine years as an RAF regular. Moving swiftly on...

Husband John retired from the RAF ten years ago after 26 years, first as an air radar technician (a pinkie, like his wife) then as an airborne technician on the AWACs.

Their son Will passed out from Lympstone in July and is now with the Fire Support Group 40 Commando Royal Marines – and is currently training for his third Ironman triathlon this month.

Completing the set, and also with a green beret (but not the same as her brother's green lid) is daughter Eleanor, who passed out from the Army Training Centre in Pirbright and will shortly start linguistic training as a private in the Intelligence Corps.

People in brief

ALL three watches of survey ship HMS Echo gathered to witness the presentation of the Worshipful Company of Chartered Surveyors' Endeavour Award to LET(ME) William Beale.

Described by his CO as "always affable and conscientious", LET Beale not only ensures critical kit such as sewage treatment and reverse osmosis plants keeps working, but is also Deputy Leading Hand of the Mess.

A NAVAL student on the Defence Technical Undergraduate Scheme has won an award for outstanding academic achievement.

Mid Alec Kingsnorth won the Frederic Barnes MechE prize for his final-year project at Aston University. He is due to start training at BRNC this month.

LT GEN Sir Alistair Irwin has taken over as Vice Chairman of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) from Admiral Sir Ian Garnett, who had held the post since 2008.

And while one former Navy man leaves, another joins – Vice Admiral Sir Tim Laurence as been appointed Commissioner of the CWGC, representing the Senior Service.

THE beautiful Slapton Wood in Devon received some care and attention from officer cadets of Diamond Division at Britannia Royal Naval College.

Working under the direction of Slapton Ley Field Centre Manager Nick Binnie, the 20-strong team helped improve pathways in the ancient woodland, cutting back overgrown plants and moving earth and rubble, as part of a college outreach project.

A FLEDGLING Naval pilot has not only graduated as a Fleet Air Arm helicopter pilot, but bagged a prize into the bargain.

Lt Rob Dixon was one of five students on 702 Naval Air Squadron to qualify to fly the Lynx – but the only one to emerge with the AgustaWestland Trophy for the best performance during training.

A LYNX helicopter flight training in the North of England took time out from their schedule to visit three schools in the area.

Flying out of RAF Leeming, 203 Flight of 815 Naval Air Squadron – which will deploy to the Atlantic later this year with HMS Montrose – called in at St Thomas More School in Blaydon, west of Gateshead, Longfield School in Darlington and St Mary's Primary School in Malton, North Yorkshire.

AND while we are on the subject of flying visits, a Sea King from 848 Naval Air Squadron took advantage of a training sortie to drop in at Sherborne Primary School in Dorset.

Maj Mark Johnson RM, undergoing refresher training with the squadron, captained the aircraft to the school, where it was greeted by around 300 pupils and staff.

The children (and adults) had a chance to talk to the aircrew about their jobs – and to have a good look at the aircraft on the temporary 'airfield'.

In-tent's colours add to place of worship

A CHURCH for Service personnel in Afghanistan has been fitted with colourful new windows, thanks to children from Plymouth.

The Task Force Helmand HQ in Lashkar Gah was recently provided with a new place to worship but the padre for 3 Commando Brigade Royal Marines felt the beige and white tent needed a splash of colour.

The tent, home to St Martin's Church, is fitted with removable plastic windows. So Revd Ian Wheatley got in touch with his pastoral worker back in the UK, who contacted the head teachers of two primary schools to ask for help.

"Almost every church has stained glass windows and although ours aren't glass, I didn't see any reason why our church couldn't have the same colourful windows," said Revd Wheatley.

"Rather than rely on the artistic talents of the marines and soldiers here, we thought we'd ask children back home to design and make them."

Pupils from Widewell and Goosewell Primary Schools worked on the brightly decorated PVC panels for weeks, and the new 'windows' have now arrived back at the base in Lashkar Gah.

The commando-trained cleric *(pictured right with one of the new windows)* said he was really impressed, and the congregation really appreciated them.

"Most of the ideas were inspired by the work of John Piper, a prolific stained glass artist who designed the post-war windows in St Andrews Church in Plymouth.," he added.



Picture: Sgt Alison Baskerville RLC



Rookies of all ages

ONE of these sailors may be nearly twice the age of the other, but they are both rookies on a veteran warship.

AB Brett Billson *(right)* decided to join the Senior Service at the age of 36 last October – six months after 20-year-old AB Nicholas 'Ronnie' Barker *(left)*.

Both are now on their first sea-going deployment aboard HMS Edinburgh in the South Atlantic.

Although he enjoyed his previous job working for an opticians in Abingdon, Brett joined up in a bid to challenge himself both physically and mentally, with a solid career path to follow.

Now a storesman in the 'Fortress of the Sea', which left the UK in May for a seven-month trip to the Falklands and the Americas, Brett's decision to sign on nearly came too late – individuals have to be under 37 years old to join the Navy.

He said: "I'm an old dog learning new tricks. I wanted a career not just a job and the Royal Navy has given me a sense of achievement I hadn't had before."

'Ronnie', a steward and first-aider, said: "I would recommend anyone to join the Royal Navy as it is a great career with many opportunities.

"It is also a great way to see the world in a different way and visit places you wouldn't usually get the opportunity to go to."

Brothers meet

BROTHERS Andrew and Stuart Rowlands from Stafford had an unexpected rendezvous in the Mediterranean when their ships shared an anchorage.

Lt Andrew is Navigating Officer of minehunter HMS Ramsey, and L/Cpl Stuart is with Delta Coy 40 Cdo on board RFA Cardigan Bay.

The brothers had not been together since March and were not expecting to see each other again until Andrew returns home in December.

Summer camp – dogs supplied

TWO dozen St Dunstaners left their families and guide dogs behind for a week for their annual summer camp in the Portsmouth area.

Based at HMS Sultan, the party – all of whom have impaired vision, including complete blindness, and are connected to the St Dunstan's charity – are each given a human 'guide dog' on arrival and then spend a week enjoying a range of sports and social activities.

Organising secretary Dave Burrows said the camp provided respite for the carers back home, and allowed the visitors to come out of their shells.

Originally a Fleet Air Arm initiative with strong links to the command's field gunners, there is an irreverent streak throughout the week – Sultan's sponsoring officer WO1 Dave Pottle noted how one 'dog' called "Duck!", and as several visitors did so he continued "... my mistake – it's a seagull."

When the manager of a pitch and putt course pondered aloud whether there had been any cheating, a voice from the back said: "Not that I saw..."

For many visitors, representing all three Services, the camp is a highlight of their year, giving them the chance to go fishing, gliding, sailing, try their hand at archery and the like.

Former sailor Brian Durber, a member of Stourbridge RNA who has macular degeneration, said: "This is my sixth camp and it's fantastic – brilliant. They treat us like royalty.

"We really look forward to this every year."

829 go back for playtime

MEMBERS of 829 Naval Air Squadron returned to Mullion County Primary School to see the children at play in the garden they helped to create during a squadron community project.

After reverting to childhood by playing in the sandpit and checking out the wildlife area, squadron personnel enjoyed hotdogs, cakes and fizzy lemonade with the children.

The team of volunteers had created a wildlife area, laid new paths, painted a fence and built an ambitious sandpit/wet play area.

The school presented the visitors with a framed picture drawn by the children, and squadron CO Cdr Martin Bravery reciprocated by giving a photo of squadron in front of Merlin helicopters.

Job swap

THE Defence Helicopter Flying School has a new Commandant – and he goes to work in a dark blue suit.

Gp Capt Jock Brown has left RAF Shawbury to take up a post as Commander of Task Force Jaguar, overseeing UK and US military helicopter flights in Afghanistan...

... which is the role Capt Paul Shawcross left to take up his new job at Shawbury, no doubt passing on some useful information to his predecessor along the way.

Double for Montrose team

AS preparations gather pace for HMS Monmouth's forthcoming deployment, two key members of the frigate's Warfare team have been recognised for their achievements.

Operations Officer Lt Cdr Fiona Jamieson, on exchange from the RNZN, was awarded the 2010 Captain Farmer Memorial Prize for her performance as the most improved student on the Principal Warfare Officers course.

PO(AWW) Henderson received the 2010 Commander Llewelyn Prize as the highest-scoring student on the PO(AWW) qualifying course.

The prizes were presented in the CO's cabin by Cdre Tim Lowe, Commodore Maritime Warfare School.

Students tidy up the place...

... AND that's a phrase you would not expect to hear too often.

But we are talking about a group of Royal Navy-leaning students of the Northumbria University RN Unit, based at HMS Calliope in Gateshead.

And the clean-up was along a stretch of the River Tyne at Blaydon.

The event was organised by the Clean Tyne Project, a partnership between the Port of Tyne and the river's bordering council authorities of Gateshead, South Tyneside, North Tyneside and Newcastle.

Clean Tyne aims to improve the river and its banks and raise public awareness of environmental issues.

"The students are usually more at home sailing on the Tyne rather than cleaning it," said their Commanding Officer, Lt Nelson McMillan.

"The teamwork shown today is exactly the spirit we are looking for in today's modern Armed Services, and being able to do something worthwhile for the local community and environment is a considerable bonus."

The students meet at Calliope, the principal training centre for the North East and home base for some 200 reservists, where they learn essential skills that will help them in a future career with the Royal Navy.

They operate a fast patrol craft, HMS Example, and regularly deploy along the North Sea coast and across to Europe.

The ship has just returned from a voyage around the coast of Scotland.

Transport to the clean-up site was by way of the project's debris disposal vessel, Clearwater, which allowed the students to see parts of the Tyne usually inaccessible to Example and her crew.

And the result was a full skip of plastic, industrial debris and driftwood being removed from the riverbank for recycling.

"The team has really enjoyed cleaning our local river," said Lt McMillan.

"We plan to make this an annual event for the unit as we believe we should look after the river on which we operate."



● *Lt Nelson McMillan (centre) and his Northumbria URNU team with the rubbish plucked from the Tyne*

Deadline looms for Millies

THE deadline is fast approaching for this year's Sun Military Awards – your chance to highlight an individual or unit deserving recognition.

The Armed Forces and general public will have until close of play on Monday September 12 to put forward nominations for the 'Millies', now in their fourth year.

Nominations will be accepted for the period covering September 1 2010 to August 31 2011, and can be made via The Sun website at www.thesun.co.uk/millies

Nominations should include as much information as possible – though bear in mind operational security considerations; if in doubt any concerns can be referred up the chain of command.

The categories for the 2011 Millies are:

- Overcoming Adversity;
- Best Sailor or Marine;
- Outstanding Soldier;
- Outstanding Airman;
- Best Reservist;
- Support to the Armed Forces;
- Lifesaver Award;
- True Grit;
- Best Unit;

There is also a judges' special award, not down to a public vote, for outstanding service not recognised elsewhere.

Tots and cadets play part

MARKET Harborough branch celebrated Sea Sunday at St Nicholas Church in Little Bowden.

The service was led by branch padre Very Revd John Morley, and an uplifting sermon was delivered by Revd David Potterton, Principal Chaplain of the Sailor's Society, and himself a former Royal Marine.

Shipmates were joined by a large contingent from the Hinckley Sea Cadet unit who, led by their CO Graeme Dryden, paraded their standard, took one of the readings and piped the *Still* and *Carry On* during the service.

Afterwards shipmates adjourned to the local inn where refreshments were served in a marquee in the garden.

The branch also played its part in Armed Forces Day in the local park, taking part in the parade of standards.

The branch had a caravan on site, dispensing coffee and tots (courtesy Pusser's Rum, who generously donated two bottles for the event).

As *Navy News* went to press shipmates were planning a visit to the National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas in Staffordshire.

And looking slightly further ahead, arrangements are well in hand for the branch's Trafalgar Dinner next month, when shipmates are looking forward to welcoming Admiral Sir Charles Perowne as their guest of honour.

All in all, a busy period for a branch which is probably as far from the sea as any other in the UK.

School celebrates

THE Royal Hospital School at Holbrook will be staging several special events over the next couple of years to mark the school's tercentenary.

And organisers are hoping to hear from former students who might be able to contribute to setting up a school museum.

The school, which was founded at Greenwich in 1712 and moved to Suffolk in 1933, is also looking to organise a reunion of Class 5A circa 1960 to coincide with the RHS300 celebrations and a reunion on June 23-24 2012.

Many of that class in particular went on to join the Royal Navy, and anyone who has not been contacted or knows of a fellow member of the class is asked to email class5A1960@gmail.com

Anyone who can help with the school museum, or would like more details on RHS300 events, should contact school master Rob Mann at rjm@royalhospitalschool.org

Website is live

THE new-look RNA website www.royal-naval-association.co.uk is now live and already receiving applications for membership.

And the Member Get Member materials launched at Conference in Plymouth in June are also being distributed by branches across the UK.

Race against time to aid matelot's widow

AN unusual request to a welfare officer proved to him that goodwill and a 'can-do' attitude still prevail in the Forces and those associated with them.

S/M Terry Hall, branch welfare officer for the **Submariners Association (Derbyshire)**, takes up the tale:

"I received a telephone call around lunch on Friday July 8 from SSAFA asking if I could help with an RN rating's cap with an HMS Excellent cap tally.

"No problem there, then...

"On phoning the widow who had requested this, I found out that her husband, AB Carron, had served in the RN as a three-badge AB and was assumed to be a gunner as he was always proudest of HMS Excellent.

"I was advised the funeral was to be held on Monday July 11 at Long Eaton as 1230.

"A cap was obtained from the local Sea Cadets and I phoned Excellent and attempted to speak to the XO, 1st Lt and eventually, after several unsuccessful telephone calls, I spoke to a bemused Bernie in the stores.

"He advised me the post had gone, but offered to go down to Portsmouth's main post office, and he addressed an envelope to me with a large first class stamp out of his own pocket.

"Saturday post showed the first class for what it is, and on Monday, knowing my post does not normally come until between 1100 and noon, I drove around the villages after having established the postman's normal route.

"I located the postie in three-quarters of an hour and set off for Long Eaton, to the Co-Op Funeral Parlour, about 12 miles away.

"There I tied the most tiddley bow ever to the hat that was placed on an old matelot's coffin for his last sailing.

"No costs to a Service charity, but hopefully a family was pleased that their last request was fulfilled – and that's thanks to people like Bernie.

"BZ mate, and thank you."



● *Shipmates and Royal British Legion standard bearers gather in front of the Great Cross of Sacrifice in the Irish National War Memorial Gardens in Dublin, with the reddish-brown original standard of the Old Contemptibles in the centre of the front rank*

High turn-out in Éire

ASSOCIATION members ensured that the RNA was well-represented at the annual Commemoration service in the Republic of Ireland.

The annual commemoration ceremony of the Royal British Legion (ROI) took place at the Irish National War Memorial Gardens, Islandbridge, in Dublin – an area of mature gardens which, according to **Area 12 (Ireland)** National Council Member S/M Ivan Hunter, are a credit to the people of the Republic of Ireland and to those in whose name they have been dedicated.

In attendance were many representatives of RBL (ROI) branches, supported by branches from Northern Ireland.

Together they put on a fine parade of standards, including the recently-discovered original Standard of the Old Contemptibles Association, formed in the mid-1920s for survivors of the British Expeditionary Force sent to the Continent in 1914.

The RNA was represented by the **Dublin** branch, led by their president S/M Dr Dermott Stones.

They were supported by shipmates from Northern Ireland's **Lisburn** and **East Antrim** branches.

S/M Hunter laid a wreath on behalf of the Association and S/M Maureen Moore laid a wreath on behalf of Area 12.

The event is an important date in the commemoration calendar, commanding the attendance of the president of the RBL Lt Gen Sir John Kiszely and the president of the RBL (ROI) Maj Gen The O'Morchoe and Col Nelson Elder, president RBL Northern Ireland, along with government ministers and mayors of various councils North and South.

There was special significance this year because it followed just a few weeks after the Queen laid a wreath at the same spot.

Her wreath and that of President Mary McAleese were on display, and shipmates were interested to see the queue of people waiting to be photographed with them.

Donation helps cadets' HQ

AS the **Fleet Air Arm Association (Wrekin branch)** meets every first Friday of the month at TS Wrekin, the headquarters of Telford Sea Cadet unit, the branch is well aware that the cadets need all the financial help they can get to fund a new roof.

When a long-serving member of the branch, S/M Peter Lunt, crossed the bar earlier this year branch members were honoured to be the beneficiaries of the memorial fund collected by his families and friends.

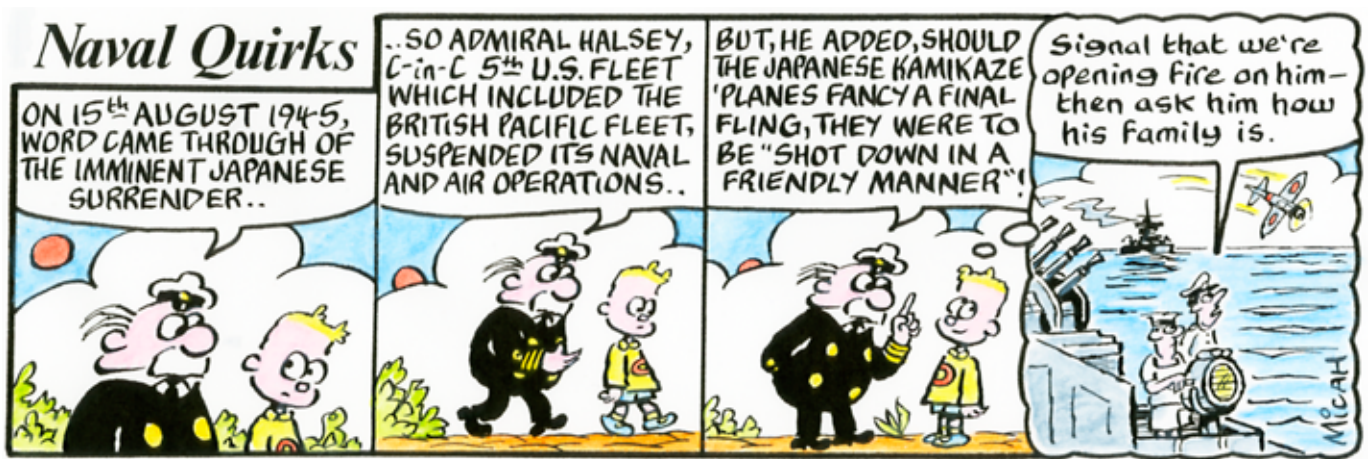
And as the amount collected far exceeded their expectations, they were more than happy, after consulting with S/M Peter's family, to give half to the Sea Cadets for their roof fund.

S/M Peter's wife Audrey and other family members presented a cheque for £400 to PO (SCC) Hoyles, of Telford unit – a drop in the ocean maybe, but perhaps one less bucket needed to catch the drops.

Mrs Lunt said: "Peter enjoyed his time in the Navy and was a strong supporter of the work that Telford Sea Cadets achieve with the youth.

"He also enjoyed being part of the Fleet Air Arm Association Wrekin branch and would be proud that a donation had been made to the Telford Sea Cadets for such a worthwhile cause."

PO Hoyles thanked Mrs Lunt and the members of the branch for their generosity.



Reunion is no secret

BLETCHLEY Park's annual Armed Forces Weekend takes place on September 3-4, while the Enigma reunion is staged on the Sunday (September 4) alone.

The main event celebrates the role of the Armed Forces throughout history, and in particular how Bletchley Park – the National Codes Centre – played its part by breaking into and reading enemy signals, including those of the various German Enigma machines.

The Enigma reunion will see around 100 Bletchley Park veterans return to their former workplace for a memorial service and a chance to explain their role to visitors.

For further details see website www.bletchleypark.org.uk

King is dead

A PEARLY King who was a staunch supporter of the **Essex branch of the Fleet Air Arm Association** has died.

S/M Larry Golding, who was also a member of the **HMS Glory Association**, joined the Royal Navy in 1942 at the age of (almost) 16, serving in Malta, the Middle East and helping build a landing strip in Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) before serving in Glory.

He left the Mob in 1946 but was always proud of his Navy roots – his pearly suit (he was Pearly King of Old Kent Road and Bow Bells) featured everything from aircraft carriers to anchors.

S/M Larry, at one time a London cab driver, died in July at the age of 84 after a long illness.

Airline policy change welcomed

A WAR veteran from the **Isle of Wight** branch has welcomed an airline's change of policy following his protest over baggage charges for an RNA standard.

S/M Alec Penstone was travelling from Southampton to the Channel Islands for the Liberation Day parade, taking the branch standard with him.

He had contacted Flybe with details of the 1.3m standard, which weighs 2.5kg, and was told it would be included in his bought baggage allowance.

But on arrival at check-in he was told it would cost another £30 each way to take the standard – and two shipmates who flew from Exeter to the parade had to leave their standards behind as they could not afford the extra.

Having taken his standard around the world with no extra charges – including Murmansk, the United States and Australia – S/M Alec contact Flybe on return to challenge the policy, adding: "Please bear in mind without my generation of men and women and what we fought for, your aircraft would be carrying the Nazi swastika on the wings and tail fin."

Flybe replied that although the charges had been applied correctly, they appreciated the fact that S/M Alec had brought this 'anomaly' to their attention, and that military regalia would in future be carried as part of the standard baggage allowance.

They also reimbursed his £60 charge.

S/M Alec concluded: "Thank you, Flybe, for your understanding and for a common-sense attitude."

Tell the world about uckers

THE BBC is hoping to put uckers into the spotlight, and is looking for players to talk about the game they love.

BBC TV *Coast* will be featuring a story on the Navy board game, a relative of ludo, and would like uckers players to tell them about their passion for the game, about tournaments aboard ships, the home-made trophies for the winners, how rules differ depending on which branch you are in or ship you're on, or where in the world you play.

They want to know about the history of uckers from those at sea and those who've now left the Service – what emotions and disagreements did Uckers arouse?

Get in touch with the Coast team through Steve Evanson, *Coast* Series Editor, BBC Birmingham, The Mailbox, *Coast*, Level 9, Royal Mail Street, Birmingham B1 1RF, or email coast@bbc.co.uk

Tom recalls B-24 bomber bravery

FORMER Royal Marine S/M Tom Bodman contacted *Navy News* after reading of S/M Ernie Havers' efforts to build a memorial to the American airmen who died when they steered their stricken bomber away from Cheshunt and crashed in a field in 1944 *(June edition)*.

"As a 13-year-old pupil at Cheshunt Grammar School I was younger than Ernie but remember it well," said Tom.

"My recollection is that it was August 12, approximately 0800.

"Or family home was then in Marina Gardens, about half a mile from the crash site.

"My older sister Violet was a friend of Edna Maxwell, so we knew the farm [where the Liberator crashed, killing all ten of its crew] well.

"At the time we were told that the B-24 had collided with a B-17 over Waltham Abbey and lost most of its tail.

"The B-17 also crashed at Lightwater, near Bagshot, again killing all the crew.

"I believe that both crews were buried in the military cemetery at Brookwood but later transferred to the American cemetery at Cambridge when it opened post-war.

"There was a memorial plaque in the public library at Turners Hill – the librarian was Pam Edwards, née Chaplin, another ex-Grammar friend.

"Ernie's dedication 'Beyond Courage' is very apt as no one in Cheshunt at that time would ever hear a word against the USAAF."

Cruise passengers support ceremony

DOUGLAS Banks, Chairman of the **HMS Indomitable Association**, recently took a cruise on the Fred Olsen ship Boudicca.

One of the ports of call for the liner was Valletta, the capital of Malta, and a harbour which had particular resonance for anyone connected with Indomitable.

Indomitable was part of Operation Pedestal, to lift the Axis siege of Malta in 1942, and though the carrier suffered damage from dive bombers and the Allied lost many men and ships, one tanker – the Ohio – did get though and Malta fought on.

"Many years later, in 1953, as HMS Indomitable approached Grand Harbour there was a terrible high-octane explosion that swept through four decks, killing and badly burning members of the crew, some of whom were buried at the Naval cemetery in Malta and others buried at sea.

"It had been a long-held ambition of mine to one day place a wreath in the Naval cemetery and also a wreath at sea.

"I spoke with Capt Jan Thommessen of Boudicca, and he agreed to assist in a small ceremony.

"This was announced in the daily newspaper produced on board.



● *S/M Douglas Banks (in beret) and Capt Jan Thommessen, the Master of the Boudicca, during the wreath-laying ceremony for victims of the fire on board HMS Indomitable in 1953*

"I was asked to meet the captain on deck aft.

"I arrived expecting a simple ceremony of putting the wreath overboard, but to my amazement the Captain and most of the officers and crew plus some 600 to 700 passengers had turned out.

"It was a simple but very moving ceremony, with a bugler playing the *Last Post* and a minute's silence.

"Escorted by the Captain we together put the wreath overboard and I broadcast the famous words 'When you go home, tell them of us and say, for their tomorrow, we gave our today.'

"Many tears were shed amongst the passengers and I must admit I had a lump in my throat."

Narrow escape for shipmates

MEMBERS of the two Cyprus branches consider themselves very fortunate to have avoided being caught up in a fatal explosion on the Mediterranean island.

Shipmates from **Eastern Cyprus** and **Cyprus** branches had decided to hold a joint social event in the form of a banyan at the Faros fish restaurant at Governor's Beach.

Held in celebration of Sea Sunday, the occasion allowed for speeches and exchanges of gifts, as well as the making and renewing of friendships.

Just 14 hours later the Governor's Beach area suffered widespread damage by a munitions explosion around a kilometre away at the Evangelos Florakis naval base, which killed 13 – including the country's most senior Naval officer – and injured more than 60.

Cyprus branch President S/M Sir Edward du Cann wrote a letter of condolence to the President of Cyprus on behalf of the RNA.

More for heroes

HAMPSHIRE County Council has joined the Heroes Welcome initiative, and is encouraging local authorities and businesses on its patch to do the same.

The scheme allows organisations to demonstrate their support for the Service community – serving and veterans – by offering concessions and support measures.

For more details of participants and offers, see www.heroeswelcome.co.uk

Trafalgar service

ON Sunday October 23 the White Ensign will once more fly over Exeter Cathedral for the annual service to celebrate Nelson's victory at Trafalgar in 1805, organised by the **Exeter Flotilla**.

Events begin with a planned fly-past by a Sea Fury T20 of the Royal Navy Historic Flight at 1115, and the service starts at 1130 with seven bells being struck on the bell of HMS Exeter.

All are welcome; for details please Christopher Seaton on 01395 514367 or email christopher.seaton@virgin.net

£50 PRIZE PUZZLE





THE mystery ship in our July edition *(right)* was HMS Burnaston, and Mr M Kirkham of Lee-on-the-Solent wins our £50 prize for identifying her.

This month's mystery ship *(pictured above)* was one of a pair of dry cargo ships taken up as bare boat charters and operated as Royal Fleet Auxiliaries.

This ship, at just over 4,800 tons, was completed in the latter half of 1962.

Her sister, completed just months before, was badly damaged by fire in 1978 and her charter was ended, though once repaired she continued to serve as a merchant vessel.

What was the name of our mystery auxiliary, and what was the name of her ill-fated sister?

Complete the coupon and send it to Mystery Picture, *Navy News*, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth PO1 3HH. Coupons giving the correct answer will go into a prize draw to establish a winner. Closing date for entries is October 14 2011. More than one entry can be submitted but photocopies cannot be accepted. Do not include anything else in your envelope: no correspondence can be entered into and no entry returned.

The winner will be announced in our November edition. The competition is not open to *Navy News* employees or their families.

MYSTERY PICTURE 199

Name

Address

.....

.....

My answers

.....

Neptune in parade

ONE of the heaviest losses the Royal Navy suffered in World War 2 will be commemorated in November when members of the **Neptune Association** will march past the Cenotaph.

Cruiser HMS Neptune was sunk just after midnight on December 1941 in the Mediterranean, taking 836 men and boys with her – the fifth worst loss of life in a single incident.

The Association will also be holding its AGM at the National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas, which will include a short service at the Association's memorial.

For more information on both events, and the second publication of *Mediterranean Minefield*, a 250-page volume which serves as a tribute to the victims, visit www.hmsneptune.com

Since 2002, 440 relatives of victims have been found by the Association – almost 396 remain unaccounted for.

Raising profile, Bristol fashion

THE **South Bristol** branch was allocated a stall at the Harbourside for the Bristol Harbour Festival finale weekend, and members made the most of the opportunities it afforded.

With assistance from both the **Bristol** and **South Gloucestershire** branches, shipmates manned the stall throughout both days of the weekend, raising awareness of the Association with the people of Bristol and beyond – and also gaining a few new members into the bargain.

Wielding the new marketing material, launched earlier this summer at the national Conference in Plymouth, shipmates worked the crowds, not an easy task when an estimated 250,000 people turned up to join in the fun over the two days.

It was also a chance for the branches to raise funds for maritime charities the RNBT and Seafarers UK.

Members reported that enquiries about membership covered not just the urban area, but well out into the hinterland, including area such as Bridgwater, Gloucester, Leicester, Nottingham, Street and Poole.

They hope their efforts will result in some fresh faces attending the relevant local branches.

The Royal Navy also turned up at this, the 40th such festival.

Hunt-class minehunter HMS Cattistock was the centre of attention, though locally-based Archer-class patrol boat HMS Raider and HMS Tracker also played their part as thousands of visitors endured lengthy queues to be able to file through to see inside a Royal Navy ship.

The festival, one of the biggest free events of its kind in the country, encompasses a wide range of attractions, including music acts, food, circus performers, comedy dance and theatre.

The harbour was filled with boats and ships of all shapes and sizes, many participating in the festival while others were just moored up for their owners to enjoy the show.



● *HALF a century ago* **HMS Tactician** *was running out of Singapore, and the submarine visited Karachi to coincide with the Queen's visit to Pakistan. The Queen and the President of Pakistan, Muhammad Ayub Khan, reviewed the home fleet aboard the Presidential Yacht. On board Tactician was Roy 'Happy' Day (third from left of the picture), who recalled that as the sole RN representative, the boat was stationed at the end of the line. He particularly recalls the signal from the Queen to slice the mainbrace, shortly before the boat slipped the buoy to proceed to sea*

Trust seeks COPP men

ORGANISERS of the COPP Heroes Memorial Trust, which is planning a memorial on Hayling Island to the personnel of **Combined Operations Pilotage Parties (COPP)**, are hoping to track down veterans of the unit.

The men, predominantly Royal Navy, trained on the island during World War 2, but so far have remained elusive – only three out of fewer than 200 have been traced.

The Trust hopes that appeals in local and regional papers may be more successful, and have asked if any reader is such a veteran, or knows of one, they should contact the Trust.

More details from www.coppheroes.org

Wrens fly to Pompey

From September 1 the Headquarters office of the **Association of Wrens** will be in Semaphore Tower where they hope to be able to borrow a cup of sugar from their closest neighbours – the RNA.

This is a significant step for the Wrens, since all the Association committee meetings and most council meetings have been held in London since 1920.

Some concern has been voiced about a move 'down south' from members who live in the north, but they have been reassured that the AGM and council meetings will still be held in London, except for the June meeting which will continue to have a different location each year.

In 2012 the June council meeting will be extended for a weekend gathering at Bletchley Park.

The Semaphore Tower office-warming party has yet to be finalised – perhaps ex-Wrens and serving RN women who work in HM Naval Base may like to attend?

Contact the Association of Wrens at their new address: Room 215, Semaphore Tower (PP 70), HM Naval Base, Portsmouth PO1 3LT, telephone: 023 9272 5141, email office@wrens.org.uk or see the website www.wrens.org.uk

Change to cruise

THE route of one of the **Association of Dunkirk Little Ships (ADLS)** cruises this month has had to be amended.

As reported in August's *Navy News*, the main ADLS veterans cruise on the River Thames takes place on Sunday September 4, and that remains unchanged.

The Saturday cruise (September 3) for personnel injured in Afghanistan and undergoing rehabilitation at Headley Court Hospital in Epsom will leave the Thames Motor Yacht Club at 1400, bound for Ash Island (not Richmond Lock), transitting East Molesey Lock at 1410, returning at 1600 and returning to the yacht club at 1630.

Spectators are encouraged to cheer the cruise along from the banks.

Derek mourned

ONE of a virtually inseparable pair of sailors has died at the age of 80.

Sherborne branch member Derek Layton, who died in late June, first met Les Laver when they joined up in 1946 – Derek was an apprentice air artificer at that stage.

Les was older by six months and had an official number prior to Derek's, so Les called Derek 'Son' and Derek called Les 'Dad'.

They went on to serve together in many ship and establishments, and acted as Best Man at each other's weddings.

Although Derek extended his service – he eventually gained the rank of warrant officer – he still ended up as an instructor with Les, working at Westlands before he retired.

Tribute to MN

THE annual **Merchant Navy** memorial service will be held at the Liverpool parish church Our Lady and St Nicholas on Sunday September 4.

There will be a parade of Merchant Navy standards and standards of other organisations at the service, which is held in memory of merchant seafarers who died in the two world wars and other conflicts right up to the present day.

The service will start at midday (attendees will gather from 1100), and a late lunch will be held at the Eldonian Village Hall off Burlington Street.

NAVAL FAMILIES FEDERATION

Delay in housing upgrades

THE NFF is highlighting a 'Pause' in SFA upgrade and SLA modernisation programmes.

Significant progress in improving Service accommodation has been made in recent years, *writes Jane Williams, Deputy Chair of the NFF.*

Despite the current financial challenges, the MOD will continue to target efforts on the most pressing accommodation issues, including major upgrades and new build projects.

However, as part of the Department's work to reduce the funding gap and balance Defence priorities, from April 2013 there will be a three-year pause in the programme to upgrade lower quality SFA homes. Some Single Living Accommodation upgrade programmes will also be put on hold.

The MOD will continue to fund routine and response maintenance and minor new works.

The future requirement of accommodation for the Armed Forces returning from Germany, and other rebasing plans, will not be affected.

The NFF comment is below:

"The NFF alongside the two other Family Federations were asked to attend a meeting ahead of the announced pause in SFA upgrades and SLA modernisation program.

"The meeting was initiated by Andrew Robathan MP, Minister for Defence Welfare Personnel and Veterans who wanted to tell the Federations personally what was going on in advance of any announcements.

"He also wanted to give the Federations an opportunity to ask questions, which we did.

"We asked that assistance with affordable house purchase should be kept firmly on MOD's radar. We also sought assurance that if there was any money available then an equal division of funding across the SFA estate and the three services should be considered.

"We queried at what point repeat repairs should become replacement work which would ultimately prove to be a more cost effective and sensible route.

"The NFF concern is that this is yet another piece of bad news on top of other bad news for Serving personnel and their families.

"The meeting was not a consultation, decisions had already been made. It appears that none of us, including DIO, have a choice in this.

"Interestingly the recent NFF Housing Survey highlighted that 20 per cent of respondents (the highest response in the category question; what do you like least about living in SFA/SSFA?) stated that the condition of the accommodation was the worst aspect of living in SFA.

"We will watch with interest what proposals are made for 2016 onwards. By then other areas of work looking at how we work and live will have delivered their initial findings.

"What shape will accommodation take in the future?

"Oh for a crystal ball or Marty McFly's Back to the Future *time machine..."*

Please keep reporting defects, following up any repairs and maintenance issues and feeding your experiences back to the NFF. As your conduit, these issues will go directly to the service providers and decision makers.

Please contact Jane Williams on jane.williams@nff.org.uk with your comments; and visit www.nff.org.uk for full details on these announcements.

■ ***Tickets for Troops – Win Olympics and Apollo Cinema Tickets***

All serving members of HM Forces, and all those medically discharged from the Forces since the commencement of military action in Afghanistan in 2001, are eligible to register for tickets to see sport, music, theatre or comedy events with Tickets for Troops.

Tickets for Troops has recently announced a new partnership with Apollo Cinemas to offer Servicemen and women the opportunity to see a film, for free, every week at all 14 UK Apollo Cinemas.

Go to www.ticketsfortroops.org.uk and click on the 'What's On' tab for full details.

There is also a chance for members of the Armed Forces to attend the Olympic and Paralympic Games next summer, free of charge. Registration for the Olympic Games tickets must be made by November 1 2011.

Simply go to the website and click 'Register', enter your details and you'll have access to the list of tickets available.

Depending on popularity, tickets are allocated on either a First Come, First Served basis or entered into a ballot where your name will be randomly selected.

You may or not be aware that each registrant is eligible to win one ballot every two years. Please make sure you choose your events wisely.

For full details of forthcoming events, eligibility and regulations visit www.ticketsfortroops.org.uk

■ ***Changes to Car Insurance Rules***

From June 2011 car insurance rules changed which means that if you've got an uninsured vehicle you are breaking the law, whether you drive it or not, unless you have a Statutory Off-Road Notice (SORN).

Cars, motorbikes and motor homes must now be continually insured. Even if you let cover lapse during holidays, hospital stays or deployments, you'll be breaking the law.

There's a £100 fine followed by clamping, seizure or your vehicle being destroyed, though warning letters come first.

The new Continuous Insurance Enforcement scheme makes it an offence to keep an active, uninsured vehicle. Under the previous law, you only needed insurance if you were driving.

The aim of the new rule is to cut down on the number of uninsured vehicles that currently stands at 1.4 million.

It'll allow the Government to use databases to match-up owners with insured vehicles.

If you are due to be away on deployment when your car insurance is due, you must plan your car insurance renewal before you go away.

If your vehicle is off road and will not be used during your deployment then arrange a SORN through the DVLA (Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency).

Information including road tax renewal and SORN declaration is available via www.taxdisc.gov.uk

If you are living on an SFA patch and un-taxed vehicles are being left in your area, please get in touch with the NFF.

■ ***Voting***

Service personnel and overseas voters are to benefit from an extension to election timetable.

The Family Federations have been actively involved in discussions with Ministry of Justice regarding the difficult issue of Overseas Voting, we are therefore pleased to see that Service personnel and their families posted overseas will be given more time to return their ballot papers under Government proposals to extend the electoral timetable.

The electoral timetable for UK Parliamentary elections will be extended to 25 days ahead of the poll, eight days earlier than under the current system, providing extra time for postal votes to be sent and returned.

Under the existing system, postal votes cannot be issued to registered electors until at least 11 working days before the poll.

The time taken to issue the postal votes shortens this window even further and means that voters, particularly those overseas, are left with a small timeframe within which to return their ballot paper.

The new provisions will mean that the printing and issue of postal votes can begin 19 working days before the poll, providing a significant increase in the time electors have to receive, complete and return their postal vote.

The provisions are published in draft legislation to be implemented in time for the next General Election, expected in 2015. Please keep an eye out for future information via www.NFF.org.uk and *Navy News*.

■ ***Homeport***

The autumn 2011 issue of *Homeport* is hot off the press... Pick up a free copy wherever you see it or contact editor@NFF.org.uk to arrange for your quarterly copy delivered free of charge to your address.

■ ***UK4U Thanks***

Each year British Forces Post Offices (BFPO) receive many generous gifts and donations to send out to Armed Forces personnel serving away from home over the Christmas period.

The gesture is wonderful but it brings up a problem, BFPO cannot forward these parcels unless they are specifically addressed to a named individual.

Help is at hand however, and the charity UK4U Thanks together with the support of business partners deliver a pre-packed Christmas goodie box to every member of the Armed Forces who is deployed over the Christmas period.

The parcel contents are carefully picked and packed to give all the recipients a taste of home and some excellent Christmas 'gizzets' wherever they are serving.

If readers of *Navy News* are thinking that they may wish to make a donation then this will be most welcome, and be reassured that MOD have approved all the deliveries.

For further information please go to www.UK4UThanks.co.uk

Your experiences form the basis of all our discussions. Please keep your comments coming.

To contact the NFF:
tel: 02392 654374
e-mail admin@nff.org.uk
or write to us at
Castaway House,
311 Twyford Avenue,
Portsmouth PO2 8RN.



TWO-SIX

Moves afoot for Naval estate

THE POSSIBILITIES of bringing together Initial Naval Training to one site and the development of a Royal Marine hub in the south-west are under consideration by the RN.

The Second Sea Lord, Vice Admiral Charles Montgomery, has written to Naval personnel to advise them of possible changes in the spread of the maritime estate across the UK.

The announcement by the Ministry of Defence in July focused primarily on the future basing of the Army and RAF, particularly in light of the drawback from Germany – however there are implications for the Naval service.

The Maritime Estate Rationalisation Programme (MERP) is considering a number of possible options for the future:

■ Bringing together Initial Naval Training at either of the existing locations – Raleigh or Dartmouth – or an alternative brown-field site. There has even been consideration of locations in the Portsmouth area but these showed significantly higher cost than the other options.

■ The move of 45 Commando Royal Marines to the south-west of England.

■ The co-location of other RM activities in the Devonport area.

■ Rationalisation of elements of the Reserve estate.

Since the announcement in Parliament by the Secretary of State, work on the maritime estate is against the context of a re-based Army concentrated into five multi-role brigades – one of which will be in Scotland.

The detailed planning of any moves by each of the Armed Forces will come into effect once the Basing Optimisation Plan is agreed in December 2011. All relocations will take into account the need to support the New Employment Model, promoting longer-term stability for military personnel and their families.

For further information see Galaxy 27-2011: Maritime Estate Rationalisation and DIB 2011/65.

Careless talk sells newspapers

ADVICE about speaking to the media has been issued once again in **DIN 2011 DIN 03-25: Contact with the media and communicating in public.**

It provides a reminder about the advice and support offered by the Navy's Communication teams, along with contact numbers, the lines of authority before speaking to journalists, and advice about social media online.

Engineering the flow of engineers

RESIDING in room 211 of West Battery Whale Island are the Senior Rates Engineering Career Managers, a team of 16 managing the careers of over 5,000 personnel, both at sea and ashore.

The teams are made up of engineers specific to the branches that they manage and three POWTRs.

Also on the same floor as the Career Managers (CMs) are the Requirement Managers (RMs).

The two teams work closely together and speak on a day-to-day basis on wide-ranging branch and policy issues for which the RMs lead.

The RMs' remit includes shaping the liability and ensuring branch structural sustainability, managing the strength through development and delivery of personnel management policies and advising on recruiting, transfer, CW extraction, EC and promotion.

With the notification of the first tranche of redundancies being announced at the end of this month, the Autumn term will be a difficult time for all Career Managers as they try to juggle their plots to meet the needs of both individuals and unit line management; patience and forbearance will be needed on all sides before coming to equitable solutions in accordance with Fleet priorities.



Drafty's corner

■ ***Current concerns across all Engineering Career Management desks***

Personnel are not regularly updating their personal details on JPA eg Address, Preferences, Mobile/Home Telephone Number.

This is leading to the Career Management desks experiencing difficulties in contacting individuals if required and also causes problems in obtaining up-to-date information for an individual's DV.

As with all desks, communication with individual career managers is important either by e-mail/telephone or, more importantly, JPA preferences which are a vital source of information for each desk and E240s.

Individual preferences need to be scrutinised by Divisional Officers – beware of personnel asking for Manchester, Cheshire and Birmingham appointments – there are no Engineering jobs in these areas!

Poor/non-existent 'front page' content in SJARs is becoming increasingly common.

Personnel are reminded that the SJAR front page is an important tool for Reporting Officers, Career Management and Promotion Boards.

According to the data held in JPA there are 594 engineering Senior Rates who have no record or are out-of-date for RNFT.

The importance of remaining in date for RNFT and ensuring your RNFT status on JPA is correct cannot be emphasised enough.

Covenant grant scheme takes flight

THE COMMUNITY Covenant Grant Scheme has been launched to support projects which strengthen the ties between members of the Armed Forces and their local communities.

Bids need to show a clear benefit to both the Armed Forces and local community; examples of the types of projects that might be supported include playgrounds, library exhibitions, activity camps and veteran outreach programmes, among many others.

For full details, please see **DIN 2011 DIN01-176: Armed Forces Community Covenant Grant Scheme.** Applications for the next Grant Panel must be in before September 30.

The way ahead for pensions

THE Second Sea Lord has written to personnel about the Armed Forces Pension Scheme in **Galaxy 28-2011**.

He advises in his introduction: "Whilst there is little by way of new information I am acutely aware of the scope for rumour and disinformation."

Among the points he underlines, he stresses: "Changes will not come into force before 2015."

■ *See Galaxy 28-2011*

Essential updates on redundancy

THE ROYAL Navy and Royal Marines have to lose approximately 5,000 personnel by 2015 to meet the manning requirements of a future smaller Fleet. The 5,000 cannot be achieved without a redundancy programme conducted in a series of stages, or Tranches, which started in April this year.

Throughout the programme Service personnel will be given the opportunity to apply for redundancy in those competency or skill fields where reductions are required.

Wherever possible, applicants will be taken in preference to non-applicants. However, this may not always be possible.

For example, an applicant who has highly-valuable skills may need to be retained and therefore a non-applicant is selected for redundancy instead.

Redundancy may come as an unpleasant shock or a welcome opportunity.

Either way everyone affected needs to start thinking about the future.

This is an update on the implementation and processes associated with Tranche 1 followed by a list of what to start considering if redundancy is a real prospect.

The list is not exhaustive as everyone's circumstances will be different.

Specific advice on individual queries can be obtained by the serving individual requesting information from their Unit Personnel Office (UPO).

For the very latest and detailed information on the redundancy programme, including all the relevant DINs, visit the Naval Service Redundancy Programme web page on the Defence Intranet.

Information for families is also available on the RNCom and Naval Families Federation websites.

■ *Key dates*

The key dates to be aware of are:

September 30 2011 – redundancy notification letters given to applicants and non-applicants.

September 30 2011 – letters despatched to all applicants not selected for redundancy.

March 31 2012 – all applicants selected for redundancy will have left the Service (six months after notification), except those completing operational tours and Post Operational Leave.

September 30 2012 – all non-applicants selected for redundancy will have left the Service (12 months after notification).

Personnel selected for redundancy can request to leave before these dates and all requests will be considered in the light of Service requirements.

■ *Selection Process*

Since the closing date for applications for Tranche 1 in May 2011, Redundancy Selection Boards have been sitting to make the difficult decisions on who, from those who have applied and other eligible personnel, will be made redundant.

In reaching their decisions the boards have all used a scoring system which considered an individual's performance and potential, whether or not they were in date for their fitness test, and their disciplinary record.

Some non-applicant personnel are excluded from redundancy because they are deployed on certain operations, or have protected rights on September 30 2012 (eg on Maternity, Adoption or Additional Paternity Leave).

Every effort has been taken to ensure the process is open, fair and equitable with confidentially protected at all times.

■ *Op Ellamy*

An extension to the operational exclusions to include Op Ellamy Units in the Mediterranean has been announced in **2011 DIN01-161**, and the Units affected were announced by signal on August 16 2011.

■ *Notification Process*

All people who have been selected for redundancy (applicants and non-applicants) will be told by their Chain of Command on September 30 2011 and will receive a notification letter detailing the date on which they will leave the Service, as well as a forecast of redundancy compensation and pension.

The notification letter will be accompanied by supporting information on:

- Sources of advice, including but not limited to the Department of Work and Pensions, Career Transition Partnership (for resettlement), the Royal Naval Association and the charitable sector.
- Resettlement entitlement and process for accessing that entitlement.
- Sources of independent financial advice.
- Service housing.

For personnel who are dislocated from the Service (eg career breaks, maternity leave) special arrangements will be made to ensure they are informed correctly.

Those personnel who applied for redundancy but were unsuccessful will be informed by letter.

This will not be delivered through the Command Chain but will be posted (on September 30 2011) direct to the individual concerned so that no one else is aware that they were an applicant for redundancy.

Anyone not selected can, of course, re-apply in any future Tranche so long as they are in a redundancy field, or submit their notice to leave in the usual manner should they wish to leave sooner.

■ *Appeals*

Any non-applicant can appeal against their selection and any unsuccessful applicant can appeal against their non-selection on the grounds that the Redundancy Selection Boards:

- Failed to take into account some fact which should have been taken into account.
- Took into account some factor which should not have been taken into account.
- Failed to follow proper procedure.

Personnel who wish to appeal have 30 calendar days (not working days) from the date of receiving their notification letter to submit an appeal to the Fleet Redundancy Cell.

■ *Resettlement*

Resettlement is the process which everyone leaving the Service undergoes and is designed to help with the transition into civilian life.

All personnel who are made redundant, applicants and non-applicants, will be entitled to the full package of resettlement regardless of their length of service.

The Summer 2011 edition of *Homeport* contained a two-page spread on resettlement and what the package entails.

Work is under way to ensure that the resettlement organisation will be able to support all redundees along with those who are exiting the Service because they have served their time or have submitted their notice to leave.

Current regulations do exceptionally allow the completion of resettlement training after an individual has left the Service but every effort will be made to assist personnel in completing resettlement before their final exit date.

■ *Personnel in sea-going units who are made redundant.*

To enable personnel made redundant to undertake resettlement, terminal leave and any outstanding annual leave, it is inevitable that a significant number of redundees must be transferred ashore within a few weeks of the announcement date.

- All successful applicants for redundancy will be transferred ashore no later than December 16 2011. Precise dates will be agreed between the parent unit and the individual's career manager.
- Selected non-applicants will be transferred ashore no later than June 30 2012.

■ *Overseas Postings*

Wherever possible, successful applicants for redundancy who are serving in overseas posts will be able to return to the UK no later than December 1 2012.

Non-applicants selected for redundancy will be returned to the UK no later than March 31 2012.

■ *Effect on remaining personnel*

As a result of notifying people of redundancy and then having to move them at short notice, all units will experience a degree of upheaval.

To reduce the impact and to ensure that the Naval Service continues to meet its operational commitments there will need to be short notice changes to assignments for many of those remaining in the Service.

In a nutshell it is likely that many people who were expecting a degree of stability will have to be re-deployed at short notice.

■ *Tranche 2*

The announcement of Tranche 2 redundancy fields due on September 30 11 has been postponed until early 2012.

■ *Fleet Redundancy Cell (FRC)*

The FRC is the central point of contact for all redundancy questions. In addition to standard business hours, the FRC Team will be available throughout the weekend of October 1-2 2011.

Useful Links

Naval Families Federation www.nff.org.uk
SPVA www.veterans-uk.info
RN Community www.rncom.org.uk
Citizens Advice Bureau www.citizensadvice.org.uk
Relate www.relate.org.uk
UK Border Agency www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk
Tax/doctors/dentists www.direct.gov.uk
NPFS www.npfs.org.uk
SSAFA www.ssafa.org.uk
White Ensign www.whiteensign.org.uk
Regular Forces Employment Association www.rfea.org.uk
Royal Navy Benevolent Trust www.rnbt.org.uk
RNRM Children's Fund www.rnrmchildrensfund.org.uk

What to consider if made redundant

■ *When will the Redundancy Compensation Award be in the bank account and how much will it be?*

The Armed Forces Redundancy Calculator, accessible through the Internet at www.mod-rc.co.uk. can provide a forecast of the lump sum payment due to an individual if they are made redundant.

Details of the final award will be confirmed by letter by the Service Personnel and Veterans Agency (SPVA) once the individual has been formally discharged and when, therefore, the final date of exit is known. It is important to note that it could be up to 35 days after the final exit date before the Compensation Award is in the bank account.

SPVA will attempt to complete all processes to make the payment as soon as they can but there are certain limitations to the JPA system.

The legal position is that redundancy compensation payments have to be made within three months of the final date an individual leaves an organisation and 35 days is well within this time-frame.

The key point here is that no-one should make financial commitments until the money has entered the bank account.

■ *When does pension entitlement (if applicable) start and how much will it be?*

The Pension Calculator at www.mod-pc.co.uk provides a forecast of pension entitlements. Again a letter from SPVA will confirm the details once an individual has been formally discharged and the final date of exit is known.

■ *What other exit payments may be due and when are they payable?*

Some personnel being made redundant will also be entitled to, for example, a pension lump sum (gratuity) in addition to a Redundancy Compensation Award. Again, SPVA will confirm all the details once an individual has been formally discharged and the final date of exit is known.

■ *Tax Status?*

Potentially some personnel will be awarded significant amounts of money as a result of redundancy.

It is advisable to gain a clear understanding of what is taxable and by how much, in order to allow sensible financial planning.

In summary, Redundancy Compensation Awards and pension lump sums (gratuities) are tax-exempt, pensions are taxable. The redundancy page on RNCom provides more detail.

■ *How and when will any public debt be recovered?*

Individuals will be asked how they intend to repay any crown debts, including LSAP. If the money is not to be taken from the Redundancy Compensation Award it will be taken from pay over the period left to serve.

■ *When must Service Families Accommodation (SFA) be vacated?*

Normal rules for personnel leaving the Service will apply, there are no special arrangements for anyone made redundant. **JSP 464** is available through the internet for further information.

■ *What happens if a property was purchased under the Armed Forces Home Ownership Scheme (AFHOS)?*

It is suggested that contact is made with the AFHOS agent on 0800 028 1980 to discuss transition arrangements.

■ *What removal and disturbance allowances are permitted to redundees who are leaving SFA and relocating to another part of the UK or overseas?*

The redundancy page on RNCom provides more detail. UPOs can also provide further information.

■ *What removal, disturbance and storage allowance is permitted if returning to the UK from abroad?*

The redundancy page on RNCom provides more detail. UPOs can also provide further information.

■ *What do Foreign and Commonwealth personnel need to consider?*

F&C personnel who are made redundant, whether applicants or non-applicants, need to consider whether they wish to return to their country of origin or remain in the UK.

If they wish to return to their country of origin they must consider how they will get themselves and their families home (the redundancy page on RNCom provides more detail).

If F&C personnel without leave to remain wish to remain in the UK, application must be made through normal channels ie the UK Border Agency.

Normal rules for vacating SFA upon leaving the Service apply.

■ *When does Continuity in Education Allowance (CEA) entitlement (if applicable) cease?*

The redundancy page on RNCom provides more detail. The Children's Education Advisory Service (CEAS) at www.ceas.org.uk should also be able to provide details.

If CEA entitlement is ceasing or personnel are re-locating to a new area in the UK then consideration needs to be given to applying for new schools.

Local Education Authority websites are the best place to start understanding the process of applying for school places. CEAS may also be able to advise.

■ *Access to medical and dental care?*

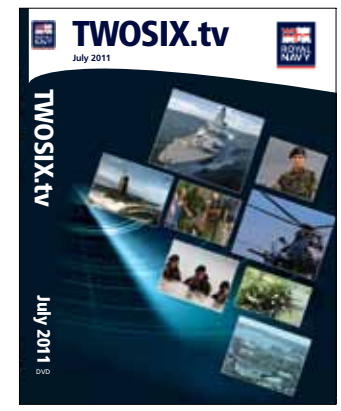
If personnel are re-locating to a new area in the UK consideration needs to be given to registering for medical and dental care.

Whether moving or not, the Service leaver will need to register, possibly for the first time.

■ *Tranche 2*

Information on which branches and rates/ranks are eligible for selection in the next Tranches will be released in the same way as for Tranche 1, and similar rules used for Tranche 1 will apply in Tranche 2.

At time of writing this article the dates were unknown and still subject to ministerial approval but will be announced as soon as they are confirmed.



Tune in to TwoSix.tv

THE latest edition of *TwoSix.tv* features reports on current operations and the RFA's support worldwide.

It provides an introduction to the new ice patrol ship HMS Protector, and an overview of the excellent work of the Navy's Photographers competing for the Peregrine Trophy.

The TwoSix.tv DVD has been aligned with the Personnel Support Brief to provide an enhanced package for sharing information across the Service.

If you want to get your message out to the Naval service through these pages or the TwoSix.tv DVD, please contact:

- Pauline Aquilina: 9621 85984
- WO1 Russ Billings: 93832

Pauline Aquilina is also the first point of contact for the Royal Navy Facebook site.

Search for Royal Navy and follow the Service online.

where to look

GALAXY MESSAGES

Galaxy 27-2011: Maritime estate rationalisation

Galaxy 28-2011: Armed Forces Pension Scheme update: Personal message from 2SL

Galaxy 29-2011: SDSR impact – Naval Service Pulse survey

Galaxy 30-2011: Changes in timing of the Redundancy Programme and exclusions for personnel deployed on operations

DEFENCE INTERNAL BRIEFS

68/11: 2nd PUS and VCDS write to all staff about Transformation and Defence Reform: 2nd Permanent Under Secretary Jon Day and Vice Chief of the Defence Staff General Sir Nick Houghton have written to all staff about why we need to transform, what transformation covers, what is Defence Reform, the principles on which Transformation and Defence Reform are based and why we should achieve the goals to get Transformation and Defence Reform right.

71/11: Armed Forces Redundancy Programme – delay to announcement of future tranches: Notification of selection for redundancy in Tranche 1 of the Armed Forces Redundancy Programme will take place, as planned on September 1 2011 for Army and RAF, and September 30 2011 for the Royal Navy.

72/11: Publication of the House of Commons Defence Committee Report on the Strategic Defence and Security Review and the National Security Strategy: The House of Commons Defence Committee published on August 3 2011 its report into the Strategic Defence and Security Review and National Security Strategy.

73/11: Pause in SFA upgrade and SLA modernisation programmes: As part of the Department's work to reduce our funding gap, and to balance Defence priorities and the budget whilst protecting front line operations, from April 2013 there will be a three-year pause in the programme to upgrade lower quality SFA homes.

DEFENCE INSTRUCTIONS AND NOTICES

DIN 2011 DIN01-176: Armed Forces Community Covenant Grant Scheme

DIN 2011 DIN01-174: Naval Service Redundancy Programme – Exit date for Applicants

DIN 2011 DIN01-169: SDSR Redundancy Appeals Process

DIN 2011 DIN01-166: Amendment to Armed Forces Terms of Service – Transfer to the Reserves for Other Ranks

DIN 2011 DIN01-161: Naval Service Redundancy Programme – Extension to Operational Exclusions

DIN 2011 DIN03-025: Contact with the Media and Communicating in Public

DIN 2011 DIN07-127: RM Officers – Officer Career Development

DIN 2011 DIN07-125: Maths and English GCSE Courses at NETS Education Centres, HMNB Portsmouth, HMNB Faslane and HMD Devonport

DIN 2011 DIN09-007: The Sun Military Awards 2011

ROYAL NAVY TEMPORARY MEMORANDA

Issue 11/11 RNTM 206/11: Fleet Air Arm Warfare Branch – Change to the pre-selection criteria for promotion to Petty Officer Aircrewman (ASW), Petty Officer Aircrewman (CDO), and Sergeant Royal Marine Aircrewman (RMAC)

Issue11/11 RNTM 208/11: Introduction of armour piercing 7.62mm ammunition to Op Kipion units

Issue 11/11 RNTM 210/11: Sea Boat checks

Issue 11/11 RNTM 212/11: Royal Navy other ranks – Valedictory Certificates and letters

NOTICEBOARD

Deaths

Marine James Robert Wright. Joined Royal Marines 2009 he overcame a shoulder injury to complete his Commando training at the first attempt and passed fit for duty July 17 2010. Fatally wounded by a grenade whilst serving in Nad-e Ali district, Afghanistan with Juliet Company, 42 Commando. August 5. Aged 22. *See page 6.*

Vice-Admiral Sir John Martin DSC. Became Chief Cadet Captain at Dartmouth and was awarded the King's Dirk 1938. Gun direction officer in Pelican during the Norwegian campaign 1940 when the ship was attacked; the bomb set off a huge explosion blowing away her stern with many losses including the first lieutenant and although badly wounded he took over as second-in-command, split the anchor ready for towing and was still on watch when Pelican reached Lerwick two days later. Although on sick leave he joined the tug Sun IV as naval liaison officer which made several crossings to Dunkirk rescuing a total of 236 troops. Pelican returned to convoy work and was struck by mines and he was injured again. 1941 he joined Antelope and involved with the hunt for Bismarck. 1942-43 he took part in the Allied landings at Algiers, Sicily and Salerno and was awarded the DSC. He served in Manxman and Bermuda in the British Pacific Fleet and 1945 at the relief of Shanghai and Tsingtao. Post-war he served on the directing staff of the Royal Navy Staff College and on the joint planning staff in Singapore. He was second-in-command of the cruiser Superb (Suez Crisis), senior naval officer in the West Indies 1961-62 overseeing independence of Jamaica and of Trinidad and Tobago, Flag Officer Middle East and later, during the withdrawal from Aden, was Commander British Forces Gulf, based at Bahrain, where he was mentioned in despatches. Head of personnel services and training 1968-70 and promoted to Vice Admiral 1970 he became Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Atlantic until 1972 when he was appointed KCB. Lieutenant governor and Commander-in-Chief of Guernsey 1974-80. May 31. Aged 93.

Vice-Admiral Sir David Anning Loram. Served during World War 2 and as a young officer was involved in the action against the German battleship Tirpitze 1944 (Operation Tungsten). Appointed Aide-de-Camp to the Governor-General of New Zealand 1946 and Equerry to the Queen 1954; Flag Officer Malta 1973, Commandant of the National Defence College 1975 and Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Atlantic 1977 retiring 1980. June 30. Aged 87.

Cdr David Kyrle Hankinson. Entered RNC Dartmouth 1942 and after training in Frobisher he joined warship Kenya on the North America and West Indies stations. He served at sea in seven destroyers, off Suez in 1956, Cyprus 1955-58 and the First Cod War off Iceland 1959. Promoted captain of Cambrian 1963 he took part in the Indonesia-Malaysia Confrontation. On the staff of the Director of Naval Plans in Whitehall 1964-67 when he retired to earn his living as a successful artist. April 4. Aged 82.

Lt Cdr Bill Henley DSC*. Pilot. Enlisted aged 18 as a naval airman 2nd class and learnt to fly in Canada. In 1944 he took part in the search for U-365 after it attacked and blew the bows off Cassandra. The radar of his Swordfish L, which was part of 813 NAS from the carrier Campania, failed and he flew under the radar control of a second aircraft and by the light of his flares saw the U-boat running on the surface; he attacked, sank it and was awarded a DSC. Post war he was seconded to the Royal Australian Navy to help build up its air arm and flew in an exchange appointment with the US Marine Corps in North Carolina. In the early1950s with 809 NAS he flew the de Havilland Sea Hornet specialising in night operations and in command during its last months of 1954. 1956-57 he commanded 893 NAS of Sea Venom fighter jets in the carrier Eagle during the invasion of Suez, successfully destroying many aircraft on the ground; he was awarded a bar to his DSC. Retiring 1968 he continued to fly and also helped to develop the air ambulance service in Scotland. Chairman of the Royal Scottish Geographical Society's Glasgow branch. June 11. Aged 88.

Lt Dickie Douglas-Boyd DSC. FAA pilot. Volunteered 1941 but was not called for initial training until the following year. Joining 820 NAS 1944 he embarked in Indefatigable from which he took part in two dive-bombing raids on the German battleship Tirpitz which was hiding in the Norwegian fjords. He converted to flying the American-built Avenger torpedo-bomber and took part in the raid on the oil refineries at Palembang, Sumatra 1945. Indefatigable received a direct hit from a kamikaze but repairs were made and thanks to her steel flight deck she was operational again just one hour later. During a raid on a munitions dump at Ishigaki his bomb failed to release and, after talking to his crew, he decided to make a second attack, however, one of his crew was hit by a shell and later died, the other crew member was sent home and never flew again and Douglas-Boyd was scarred by this tragedy; he was awarded the DSC for gallantry, skill and devotion of duty in the Far East. June 17. Aged 88.

Cdr Barry W Semke. Joined 1966. Served in Danae 1972-74 and DMEO Jupiter 1976-78. Later in Rame Head in Northern Ireland and MEO Active 1983-84. First MEO of Brave 1985-87, joining her at Yarrow Shipbuilders, Glasgow; retired in the early 1990s. July 25. Aged 63.

Lt Cdr Keith Michael Faulkner RNVR. An accountant who served the Naval Reserve for 25 years till 2005. Based at Flying Fox and Wildfire he also spent some time aboard Ark Royal and Illustrious. May 28. Aged 60.

Barrie 'Jan' Piercy. Fleet Chief Ordnance Electrical Mechanician. Served 1954-79 at Collingwood, Jupiter, Hardy, Birmingham, Wakeful, Ausonia (Malta), Albion, Exmouth, Duncan, Sultan and Antelope (1972-77) from a keel in dry dock at Woolston through construction and commissioning; and was recognised for solving an auto pilot problem. His final posting was Collingwood as an instructor. Upon leaving the RN he joined the film industry and was awarded a BAFTA for services to the film industry. August 2. Aged 74.

John Clifford. LSA(S). Joined 1953 trained as Boy Seaman at St Vincent. Served Ranpura, Recruit, Albion, Zest and Saintes. HMS Wizard and HMS Cadiz Joint Association. May 21.

John Ellis Gough. AB on board Peacock 1951/53 and a member of the association. February 26.

Peter Thomas. 'Jack Dusty'. Served in Morecambe Bay, 1954-55 commission and a member of the association.

Alan Earl Dudley DSM. Gunner. Served 1941-52 in Vanguard, Cumberland, Illustrious, London and others. Awarded the DSM for bravery during the Yangste incident aboard London and a member of the association. July 22. Aged 88.

Robert 'Bob' Nixon. CPO(WEA). Served 1985-2009 in Cleopatra, Brave, Broadsword, Blackwater, Chatham and Northumberland. July 31 in a scuba diving accident in Port Alberni Vancouver where he relocated after his retirement. Aged 42.

Maurice Stanley Cave. WO 1st Class Mechanician. Served 1948-85 in St Austell Bay, Maidstone, St Kitts (Suez 1955-56), Abdiel, Eagle, Carhampton, Ausonia, Defiance, Malta (1958-61), Gibraltar (1963-65), Hong Kong (1971-73) also Portsmouth, South Queensferry, Scotland and finally Drake, Devonport. July 14. Aged 80.

John 'Taff' Hayward. Served in Peacock as AB 1952-53. February 4.

Alan Hilton. CPO(MW) Diver. Served 1967-96 in both Gulf wars, Penelope, Brinton, Sheraton and Ledbury. August 7 whilst on holiday in Spain. Aged 59.

Roy David Bater. Boy Seaman, Ganges 1946. Served in Wrangler, Consort, Zephyr, Reclaim (short term on Reclaim during search for Affray), HM Customs 1955-58, Hampshrie Constabulary 1958-87. HMS Consort Association. July 26. Aged 81.

ROYAL NAVAL ASSOCIATION

Charles Henry Walker GC. CPO. Served 1932-54 in a variety of warships including Hood. As a Petty Officer on board Ledbury a Hunt-class destroyer assigned as close escort to the merchantmen during Operation Pedestal, the convoy came under relentless attack from German and Italian bombers, torpedo bombers, E-boats and submarines. The cargo ship SS Waimarama was struck close to the bridge and the deck cargo of petrol ignited in one sheet of flame and a violent explosion amidships sank amid burning oil. Shouts through the smoke were heard and Ledbury closed in to the scene, lowered boats and scrambling nets to pick up survivors. PO Walker saw one of the injured survivors in difficulties in the water and dived over the side, swimming out amid flames despite knowing that if Ledbury came under renewed attack she would be forced to turn away and leave behind both himself and the man he was attempting to rescue; but the destroyer did not turn away and both men were safely picked up. He was awarded the Albert Medal (which was later changed to the George Cross). Founder member of the Albert Medal Association (his Albert Medal was presented to the Royal Naval Museum at Portsmouth), member of the Victoria Cross and George Cross association and Redcar & District RNA. July 17. Aged 97.

Dave Cheshire. Stoker 1st class. Joined 1942 and served in Landing Craft at D-Day and finally Cleopatra. HMS Wizard & HMS Cadiz Joint Association also Chairman of Birmingham (Shard End) branch RNA. May 18. Aged 85.

Raymond Castle. NA1 AH3. Served 1949-50 National Service at RNAS Siskin, Heron, and Illustrious. Founder member of HMS Illustrious Association, Southern branch chairman Yarmouth FAA Association, member of the Aircraft Handlers Association and Norwich RNA. May 28. Aged 79.

Colin Warner. RAF. Associate member of March branch. Bomber Command during WW2. July 13. Aged 85.

Walter 'Wally' Griffin. WW2 Veteran served on Russian convoys and also took part in the Battle of Crete whilst on board Ajax. Liss & District branch. July 15. Aged 88.

William 'Bill' Roake. FAA. Served 885 Squadron, Ruler (Normandy) and 759 Squadron (Pacific). Past Chairman and Vice chairman Bude RNA. July 26. Aged 86.

Harold Victor Canning. L/SM. Served 1948-55 in Warrior, Indefatigable, Orion, Vigo, Allonia, Zeebrugge, Illustrious and Drake. Secretary of HMS Vigo Association and member of West Bromwich RNA. June 22. Aged 81.

Pam Timms (née Woods). Wren. War Service 1939-45 at Chatham and Harwich. Ipswich RNA. April. Aged 89.

Wally Mickleburgh. Chief Stoker. Served 1938-60 on Arctic convoys and in Liverpool, Delhi, Thisby, Lemington, Glory (1953-55); various sweepers and Pembroke. Ipswich branch. June. Aged 92.

Arthur Webster. PO Stoker. Served 1939-51 Atlantic/Russian convoys, siege of Malta and in Zulu, Onslo, Ulna and Drake. Ipswich branch. July. Aged 92.

David 'Davy' Hyndman. Served in Ganges, Ulster, Alamein, Loch Craggie, Royal Albert, P6025, P6033 and Gannet. Committee member of the Belfast branch for many years. July 24.

Tony Monks. Leading Signalman. Served throughout World War 2 on various ships, mainly destroyers. Survivor of torpedoing of Hunt-class destroyer Puckeridge in the Mediterranean 1943 – 62 lost. Llandudno branch. August 8. Aged 89.

SUBMARINERS ASSOCIATION

W 'Bill' Burke. Sto. Mech. Submarine Service 1951-53 in Anchorite, Turpin, Scorcher and Tireless. Scottish branch. Aged 82.

F 'Fred' Cannon. Sto.1. Submarine Service 1943-46 in Taurus and Tribune. Vectis branch. Aged 97.

Lt Cdr P H T 'Peter' Granger. Submarine Service 1948-55 in Tradewind, Tiptoe and Sleuth. Portsmouth & Sussex branches. Aged 84.

K S 'Ken' Hopkins. Tel. Submarine Service 1944-46 in Una, Talent and Taurus. Welsh branch. Aged 86.

LST & LANDING CRAFT ASSOCIATION

R Jones. Served LST 301 and Fiona, Resolution and Warspite. Bishops Waltham. May 2.

Jack Higginbottom. Served LCI(L)s 122, 285 and LCT 88. Leeds. July 7.

Frank Lyons. Served LST 159, MMS 1043 and 1075. London. July 10.

John Bielby. Served LCM Flotilla 680. Hull. July 13.

J P Graham. Served LST 401. Wallsend. July 15.

W D Morris. Served 36 S&R Flotilla, LCE 51 & LBO 53. Mayfield. July 25.

ALGERINES ASSOCIATION

Robert A Ward. ME1. Served in Wave. March.

Fred G Townshend. POMM. Served in Cheerful. July 26. Aged 86.

William Duke. AB. Served in Rowena. July.

Archie Scardifield. L/Sea. Served in Wave and Providence. July 9. Aged 88.

FLEET AIR ARM ASSOCIATION

Robert 'Bob' Stirling. TAG. Served 1943-46 in Daedalus, Royal Arthur, St Vincent, Kestrel, Victory, Condor and Waxwing and in later years enjoyed the social activities at Gannet. TAG Association and Daedalus branch FAAA. May 20. Aged 87.

John Wood. CPO(A/E). Served 1946-68. Bristol and District branch. June.

Pat Rogers. Wren AM. Served 1943-46 in Blackcap. Greater Manchester branch FAAA. July 10.

Larry John Golding. AM(E). Served 1942-46 at Royal Arthur then prior to joining the FAA trained at Landrail (Machrihanish, Scotland) then shipped to Malta, the Middle East and Ceylon; his last ship was Glory and a member of HMS Glory association. Full member of the FAA Association Essex branch. As the Pearly King of Old Kent Road and Bow Bells he supported many charities and as a London Cabby he supported the outings for war disabled veterans and disabled children. July 14. Aged 84.

Trophy lives



DESPITE losing many ships in the first Battle of Copenhagen in 1801, six years later Denmark still maintained a considerable Navy and remained in possession of Schleswig-Holstein, Norway and Iceland.

The southern Danish border was defended by its army against a possible attack by Napoleon, while the British concerns were that a French attempt to close the Baltic to their shipping would reduce access to Swedish and Russian allies.

By mid-July 1807 British intelligence indicated that not only might the French invade Denmark via Schleswig-Holstein but also that the Danes may have already secretly agreed to this.

Accordingly a force of some 20 ships was despatched to the Kattegat with the express purpose of keeping the Danish fleet under surveillance and, if necessary, to take action to prevent their seizure by the French.

A further 50 ships, under Admiral James Gambier, were also sent to Danish waters by the Admiralty while British troops under General Lord Cathcart were also deployed to the area.

Further intelligence indicated that Napoleon was trying to persuade Tsar Alexander I of Russia to form a maritime alliance with Denmark and Portugal against Britain.

The British made various offers to the Danes, all with the object of gaining sufficient control of their fleet to prevent its use against the Royal Navy.

By the end of the month Napoleon had given the Danes an ultimatum intended to persuade them to take up arms against the British; British diplomats failed to persuade Denmark to end its neutrality and on August 15 a demand that their fleet be placed under British control was emphatically rejected.

As a result, a state of hostility existed between Britain and Denmark.

British troops under General Wellesley defeated Danish forces near Koge, south of Copenhagen, and within a few days the capital was encircled.

As the Danes refused to surrender, Gambier commenced a three-day bombardment of the city on September 2.

Five days later the Danish General Peymann – who had fought bravely – had little option but to surrender the city and the fleet of almost 70 various ships.

Over 2,000 civilians were killed and 30 per cent of the capital's buildings were destroyed during the bombardment.

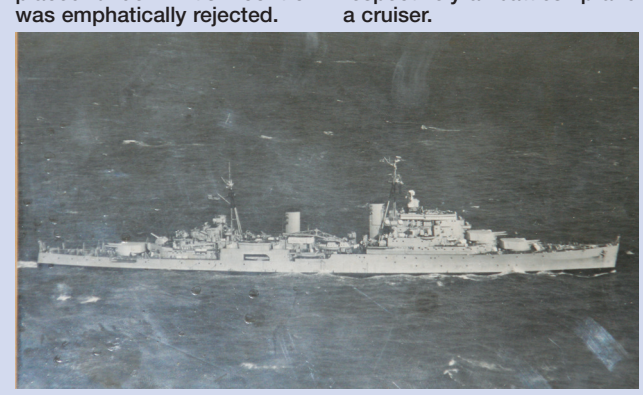
While the aim of preventing the Danish fleet from being used against the British had been achieved, its achievement – effectively by an attack on Denmark's civilians – was to be the subject of fierce argument in Parliament.

The Government expressed its satisfaction at the outcome, while the Opposition claimed that the action was a stain on the British nation and had turned Denmark from being a neutral to an enemy power.

The debate and argument rumbled on until March 1808, when the Opposition tabled a motion of censure on the battle – the motion was defeated.

One of the Gambier's ships used in the bombardment of Copenhagen was HMS Superb, a 3rd rate of 74 guns; she was built in 1798 and finally broken up in 1826.

There have been ten warships named Superb, that at Copenhagen was the fifth of the name while **Trophies 18,065** and **17,856** depict the eighth and ninth Superbs, respectively a battleship and a cruiser.



NAVY NEWS

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Or alternatively, call us on 023 9272 6284 or 023 9272 0494 to pay by Credit Card.

Sports lottery

July 16: £5,000 – **Mne M P Stanbury**; £1,500 – **CPO D Hollbrook**; £500 – **AB2 E H Carrick**.

July 23: £5,000 – **Mne A L Drinkwater**; £1,500 – **Mne P J Waren**; £500 – **CPO A J Simpson**.

July 30: £5,000 – **LH A Hall**; £1,500 – **Mne M O'Grady**; £500 – **AB1 C Owens**.

August 6: £5,000 – **AB1 M J Solomon**; £1,500 – **Lt S J Wren**; £500 – **Mne N Flint**.

Entries for the Deaths column and Swap Drafts in October's Noticeboard must be received by **September 12**

Contact sheet

Ministry of Defence: 0870 607 4455, www.mod.uk
Royal Navy recruitment: 0845 607 5555, www.royalnavy.mod.uk
Veterans Agency: 0800 169 2277, www.veterans-uk.info
RN and RM Service records: 01283 227912, navysearchpgrc@tnt.co.uk
Royal Naval Association: 023 9272 3823, www.royal-naval-association.co.uk
Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity: 023 9254 8076, www.rnrmc.org.uk
RNBT: 023 9269 0112 (general), 023 9266 0296 (grants), www.rnbt.org.uk
British Legion: 08457 725725, www.britishlegion.org.uk
Naval Families Federation: 023 9265 4374, www.nff.org.uk
Seafarers UK: 020 7932 0000, www.seafarers-uk.org
SSAFA Forces Help: 0845 1300 975, www.ssafa.org.uk
RN Community: www.rncom.mod.uk
Medals enquiries: 0800 085 3600
Royal Naval Museum: 023 9272 7562, www.royalnavalmuseum.org
Fleet Air Arm Museum: 01935 840565, www.fleetairarm.com
Royal Marines Museum: 023 9281 9385, www.royalmmarinesmuseum.co.uk
RN Submarine Museum: 023 9251 0354, www.rnsubmus.co.uk
National Maritime Museum: 020 8312 6565, www.nmm.ac.uk
Imperial War Museum: 020 7416 5320, www.iwm.org.uk

NOTICEBOARD

Reunions

OCTOBER 2011

HMS Mauritius (Shore Base). If you served on the island of Mauritius between 1962-1976 you may be interested in the fourth reunion that is being held in the WO, SR & SNCO's Mess at HMS Nelson, Portsmouth on October 8. More information is available from Tina Lowe (née Hills) at tina.lowe3@ntlworld.com or tel: 01329 843347.

NOVEMER 2011

The Neptune Association will hold its next AGM at the National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas, Staffordshire, on Saturday November 26 at 3pm. The event includes a short service to remember the 836 men lost on HM Ships Neptune and Kandahar 70 years ago in December 1941 – the RN's fifth worst loss of life in World War 2. Relatives and friends welcome. www.hmsneptune.com. Contact Graham Davies 07941 440113 and 01327 877784.

DECEMBER 2011

Portsmouth Field Gunners Association: Christmas Social. HMS Excellent WO & Senior Rates Mess. December 3, starting at 1900 to 2359. All Portsmouth Field gunners, Associate members, families and friends are welcome to join in the festivities. For more details log into http://www.portsmouthfieldgunners.org.uk or email: robdon.wyatt@ntlworld.com or tel: 023 9235 6868.

MARCH 2012

HMS Undine & Urchin Association: in company with Ursa, Ulster, Ulysses, Urania and Undaunted are holding their next AGM and Reunion at the Inglewood Hotel, Torquay from March 9 to 12. Contact Secretary, Chris Heslop at chris@cheslop.plus.com or tel: 01229 826227 or write to 68 Rakesmoor Lane, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria LA14 4LQ.

APRIL 2012

HMS Glasgow (C21/D88): 32nd reunion will take place at the Haddon Hotel, Eastbourne from April 20 to 23. All ex-crew are welcome. Details from Garry Eaton, 10 Elderwood Avenue, Thornton-Cleveleys, Lancs, FY5 5EQ or tel: 07864 712776.

Royal Navy Display Team 1985 Reunion: Former members of the 1985 Royal Navy Display Team, Gary Morley and Gary Burton, are organising a reunion of the 1985 Royal Navy Display Team on April 29, in the rural village of Lochailort in the Scottish, West Highlands. If you were a member of the 1985 Royal Navy Display Team or know of anyone who was you may be interested in joining us. You can register your interest either by contacting Gary Morley at gary.morley@oddfellows.co.uk or register your interest on the facebook site Royal Navy Display Team 1985: http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=42688338104. If you require any further information please contact Gary on 0151 949 0712.

HMS Hermes Reunion/30th Falklands Anniversary: Will take place from April 5 to 8 at the Royal Maritime Club, Portsmouth. To join the association and more information contact the Secretary at richardtipping@blueyonder.co.uk or tel: 01752 787697.

MAY 2012

HMS Danae First Commission: Reunion from May 18 to 19 at the Chesterfield Hotel, Chesterfield. Details on the website at www.hms-danae.com. Further information from Dave Shoemaker at dfedcrusher25@hotmail.com or 119 Gloster Park, Amble, Northumbria NE65 0HF.

JUNE 2012

Greenwich Royal Hospital School: Holbrook will over the next couple of years be staging several events to celebrate the school's tercentenary. Details can be obtained from Rob Mann at rjm@royalhospitalschool.org, a master at the school and heavily involved with the organisation of RHS300, as it has become known. Rob Mann is also involved in setting up a School Museum, so would welcome communication with any former student. To coincide with the celebration he is trying to arrange a reunion of Class 5A circa 1960. Many of Class 5A joined the Royal Navy as did many boys of the school. Although many are in touch, an email address hjas been set up at class5A1960@gmail.com to locate and pass on information to ex class members. Be advised that the reunion is planned for June 23-24 2012.

Ask Jack

BBC TV *Coast* – Uckers: BBC TV's *Coast* is calling on Uckers fans to get in touch with the show to contribute to a story on the Navy game that very few outside the Senior Service know anything about. *Coast* are looking for Uckers players to tell us about their love for the game – we want to know about tournaments aboard ships, the homemade trophies for the winners, how the rules are different depending on which ship you're on, or where in the world you play. How can Uckers compete in the world of Playstation and flat-screen TV? We want to know about the history of Uckers from those at sea and those who've now left the Service. What passions and disagreements did Uckers arouse? Please get in touch with BBC *Coast* and tell your Uckers stories. Contact Steve Evanson, *Coast* Series Editor, BBC Birmingham, The Mailbox, *Coast*, Level 9, Royal Mail Street, Birmingham B1 1RF, or email coast@bbc.co.uk.

HMS Black Swan: I write as an ex-stoker in HMS Black Swan on the China Station in 1945. If any ex-matelots of that era are around, please, drop me a (normal) letter, Write to Douglas Baggott, 15 Southam Close, Hall Green, Birmingham B28 0AE.

HMS St Vincent, Duncan 972 Class, Nov 1956. If these numbers mean anything to you, then three of us in the West Country are in contact, Rob Jerrard, John Long and Ken Jones. We would like more to join us so please contact Ken Jones at krhysjones@blueyonder.co.uk or tel: 01752 406326.

HMS Raleigh Passing Out Parade Summer 1991: Can anyone help me find a copy of the VHS tape of this occasion as ours was lost when we moved house and is no longer available from the film company. If we could borrow it to have a copy made that would be wonderful. Contact Ian Todd at iantodd1@btinternet.com or tel: 020 8660 6127.

HMS Petard: I used to be in contact with Reg Crang some time ago. I have his phone number but I cannot get through for some reason. My name is Tom Tate and I am Tommy Brown's cousin. My mother and Tommy's father are brother and sister. I wish to inform him about Tommy's family history. I had promised to chase it up for him. Contact Tom Tate at topper1929@gmail.com or tel: 0191 257 5288.

(Perry) M Mason: Please can you help me to trace this person? I didn't know his rank, but his name is Mr (Perry) M Mason and he lived at St Budeaux, Plymouth. In October 1985 he was based at HMS Defiance as I have photographs of him at my husband's retirement party which he had arranged. He also attended my husband's funeral, Warrant Officer 1st Class, Maurice Cave on Friday July 29 2011. I would like to trace him to give me the opportunity to talk to him more about the work he and my husband did together in the navy. Everyone wanted to talk to me after the funeral and Mr Mason faded into the background and sadly we didn't have the chance to exchange telephone numbers. Please contact Pam Cave at willmotts@blueyonder.co.uk (her daughter's email) or tel: 07740 244356.

John William Andrews: I have been trying for many years to find family and friends of my father CPO(Tel) John William 'Bill' Andrews, who was killed in the submarine Triad in 1941. His father's name was William Reginald Andrews and his mother's name was Lesley. If you can help contact Marie Bullock, 36 Tor View Court, Somerton Road, Street, Somerset BA16 0FE.

HMS Warspite: Does anyone know why on HMS Warspite, the 'X' Turret, traditionally manned by Royal Marines, was manned by Seamen. I was a member of 'X' Turret's gun crew on Warspite. Contact Roy Emmington, 237 Magpie Hall Road, Chatham, Kent ME4 5JB.

1971 1981 1991 2001 THE TIME OF YOUR LIVES

We flick back through the pages of Navy News to see which stories were drawing attention in past decades...



● *HMS Ashanti*

September 1971

ONE of the longest live radio broadcasts from a warship since the late lamented days of the Spithead Fleet Reviews (and Cdr Woodroffe's memorable 1937 broadcast 'the Fleet's all lit up') was staged by HMS Ashanti during her Meet the Navy tour of Britain.

The Tribal-class frigate's Public Relations Officer organised the broadcast by BBC Radio Teesside as the ship was alongside in Middlesbrough.

The station's 400,000 listeners awoke at 0615 to a bugle call from the upper deck and until 0900 were entertained with interviews, music requests and weather reports from members of the ship's company.

After the marathon broadcast there was just time for the ship's company to have a quick cigarette before the first party of schoolchildren arrived to tour the frigate.

September 1981

SAILORS from HMS Exeter joined veterans from the cruiser of the same name in Exeter St David's station to mark the 'twinning' of the ship with a diesel locomotive.

Two gleaming brass plaques were mounted onto the British Rail Class 50 loco, both cast in the style of the Exeter badge, a lion rampant, with crown and orb, emerging from the sea.

The commanding officer of the Type 42 destroyer, Capt Jeremy Dreyer, unveiled one of the plaques, watched by members of his ship's company and sailors who had served in the Exeter of River Plate fame.

September 1991

HMS Norfolk carried out the first live Seawolf firing in Cardigan Bay, successfully engaging a small radio-controlled model aircraft.

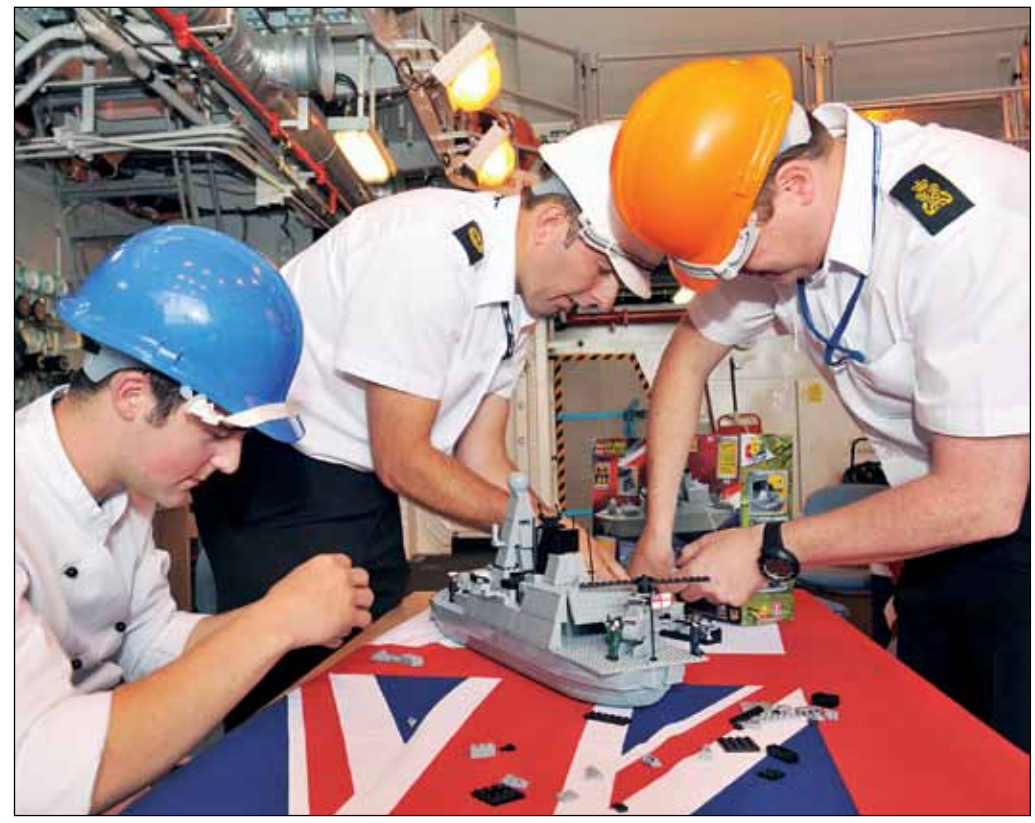
The vertical launch Seawolf, fired from deck-mounted silos, a rapid-reaction close area defence system against missiles and aircraft, was to be fitted to all Type 23 frigates and the RFA's new auxiliary oiler replenishment vessels by the mid-1990s.

September 2001

THE main Royal Navy forces involved in Exercise Argonaut were leaving the UK for a four-month deployment described by the Commander UK Maritime Forces, Rear Admiral Burnell-Nugent, as 'a demonstration to anyone on the world stage who might behave badly.'

Led by the flagship, HMS Illustrious, 25 warships, submarines and support vessels were to take part in exercises in the Mediterranean and Middle East, culminating in the major, tri-service exercise Saif Sareea.

The exercises were intended to demonstrate the UK's ability to deploy, operate and sustain a substantial maritime task force and to reinforce the UK's commitment to the security and stability of the Mediterranean region and Middle East.



Diamond's deft destroyer design

IF ONLY the real thing were this easy.

Five people, 120 minutes, £49.99 and one finished Type 45… which is a saving of about £999999950.01, six years, and several thousand people.

It would have been even quicker (if not cheaper) with instructions…

Three teams were set to work building a replica Type 45 destroyer on HMS Diamond in Portsmouth to launch the new officially-sanctioned playsets for youngsters – but without the building manual.

The sets, produced under licence by Character Building, are designed for youngsters aged seven and above. It should take children about 90 minutes to two hours to complete…

…which is roughly what it took the three teams (two from Diamond, who have first-hand knowledge of 45s serving on one, and one from BAE Systems, who build the class) to complete the 514-piece Lego-esque sets using intuition and photographs of the finished models to guide them.

"It looks a bit like a Type 45 – there's a blunt end and pointy end," said AB(CIS) Adele Knibbs. "Actually some of the details are great, but it's a nightmare to build without instructions. Being on a Type 45 makes no difference whatsoever."

The 514 pieces include five small figures – one pilot for a less-than-authentic helicopter, two matelots in No.1s and two in anti-flash – 30mm guns, opening hangar door, silo with four missiles (44 fewer than the real thing) and an ops room with seats and consoles.

The 4.5in gun, Sea Viper missiles, main mast, the 'spinning egg' Sampson and the black slab of the long-range radar are fairly obvious, thanks to their distinctive shapes. But as for the rest, well the kit had junior and senior rates and civvies scratching their heads.

Younger Diamonds had the edge over their older shipmates because, as one chief put it, "they've only just stopped playing with toys". They were also aided by 15-year-old Jordan Rushworth from Gosport, son of Diamond's LCH Lee Rushworth, although the teenager conceded "My head hurts – it's too hard for a seven-year-old to complete."

In the end, age and experience triumphed over youthful exuberance; a combined team from HMS Northumberland (which isn't a Type 45…) and Diamond, led by PO Baxter and CPO Hemstock – *pictured above by LA(Phot) Jenny Lodge, FRPU East.*

Unlike the real thing the winners had spare bits left over at the end, so decided to show a bit of initiative and used the leftovers to build a catamaran contraption.

The models are the latest RN toy tie-in; already available are larger action figures, such as a diver and talking Royal Marines Commando.

They come under the banner of the Navy's 'toymaster', Lt Cdr Steve Hayton, a Merlin observer currently overseeing RN marketing in Whitehall.

As well as toys he looks for opportunities to raise the Navy's profile through officially-licensed merchandise which presently includes Haynes manuals and a line of clothing from fashion retailer Next.

There are talks to create a Royal Navy tea (you could call it Jack Char…) to join RAF tea on the supermarket shelves, but the various toy lines are by far the most popular licence.

Plans are in hand for model RN Merlins (again there's an RAF one already) and a minehunter, plus some RM Band Service figures for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee next year.

"This is a worthwhile venture – it generates income which is for the good of the Service, but it is also about getting the RN in the public eye, getting people talking about the Navy. And we only endorse quality products," said Lt Cdr Hayton.

The sets are available via www.characterbuilding.eu, or you can have a go at winning one of three models as the firm's kindly donated them to us (you will have to build the ships yourselves… with instructions).

To win, tell us the name of the famous toy store – the largest in the world – in London's Regent Street. Send your entry to type45@navynews.co.uk or Type 45 Competition, Navy News, Leviathan Block, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth, PO1 3HH.

Entries must be received by mid-day on Friday October 14 2011. The normal competition rules apply.

Talking Navy News

Navy News is available free of charge as a digital file on memory stick or email from Portsmouth Area Talking News for those with difficulty reading normal type. Contact 023 9269 0851 and leave a message with a contact number, or email patn-rec@hotmail.com. A speaker that will take a USB plug is required or the file can be played back through a computer.

Check out the new Navy News website at www.navynews.co.uk

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EDUCATION
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A Navy News Advertorial feature

Glorious voices of RHS

THE choir of the Royal Hospital School, Suffolk, is no stranger to the prestigious venues of London; singing regularly in St Paul's Cathedral, St James Palace and St Martins-in-the-Field. There is no surprise then, they have been 'spotted' by aficionados of choral music.

John Rutter, who has been described as "the most successful and well-known composer of choral music in recent British History", has developed a close relationship with the Royal Hospital School.

An invite to the School's Christmas Carol Service and the opening of their new state-of-the-art Music School in December 2008 led to him saying: "The new Reade Music School is magnificent; one of the finest music facilities I have ever seen.

"It will make a perfect home for the flourishing musical activities of this marvellous school".

He went on to describe the School's 130-strong choir as "one of the largest, finest and most committed choirs I have ever found in a school."

He subsequently invited the choir to accompany the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra at his Christmas Celebration Concert at the Royal Albert Hall in December 2009 and their excellent performance led to a request to join him again in 2010.

This time it was locally at the Ipswich Regent, again with the



Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, where the red-clad choristers aged between 11 and 18 years, set the scene perfectly for an evening of Christmas music and song.

When not benefiting from the expert mentoring of Rutter, the choir is under the guidance of experienced conductor and organist Peter Crompton, who has been Director of Music at the Royal Hospital School since 1984.

As well as leading the music in a very busy department, he gives regular organ recitals at many major venues including St Paul's and Liverpool Cathedrals. He runs the Choral and Orchestral Society of the School and is a former President of the Suffolk Organists' Association.

Peter is also invited to play the organ at the Royal British Legion Festival of Remembrance at the Royal Albert Hall each year.

The Royal Hospital School is a co-educational full boarding and day school for 700 pupils aged 11 to 18 years set in 200 acres of stunning Suffolk countryside, overlooking the River Stour.

For more information go to www.royalhospitalschool.org or 01473 326210.

Swinford balances school life

FOUNDED in 1667, Old Swinford Hospital is one of the UK's leading state boarding schools for boys from 11-18, with girls admitted in the Sixth Form.

Almost two-thirds of the school's 660 pupils are full or weekly boarders. Its reputation is based on high academic standards and a traditional ethos.

Old Swinford Hospital is situated in the heart of England, with easy access to the motorway network and Birmingham International Airport.

As a state boarding school it welcomes applications from UK and EU nationals for whom the education is free.

Parents pay for boarding which from September 2011 will be £3,375 per term, a fraction of the cost of an equivalent boarding place in the independent sector, as parents only pay for accommodation and supervision of their children.

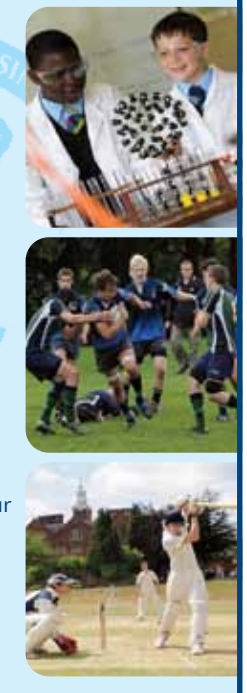
As a High Performing School, the curriculum embraces both traditional and modern subjects and includes many subject-based enrichment opportunities unique to the school.

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Heath Lane, Stourbridge, DY8 1QX

www.oshsch.com

A life-changing opportunity for children of seafaring families

Education is often in the news. Every parent wants to give their child the very best start possible, but in these shifting times, choices are difficult, unpredictable and sometimes limited. However, for children of seafaring families – whether their parents are currently serving, or their maritime connections date back to their grandparents – there is a unique opportunity open to them to attend one of the country's leading independent boarding schools.

An affordable education

As serving members of the armed services, parents may be eligible for MOD Continuity of Education Allowance, where the fees are set at the minimum parental contribution of around £1900 p.a. In addition, through its parent charity Greenwich Hospital, the Royal Hospital School is able to offer generous means-tested bursaries to the children of families with backgrounds in the Royal Navy, Royal Marines, Merchant Navy, Fleet Auxiliary Service and some other maritime professions. These unique bursaries are a result of the School's history. Originally founded in 1715 to educate boys for service in the Royal Navy, the School has evolved to become an all-inclusive co-educational school for children aged 11-18, from a wide range of backgrounds.



Set in 200 acres of beautiful Suffolk countryside, the Royal Hospital School is a unique place to live and learn. Close pastoral care ensures that the school is a happy place where every child feels nurtured, supported and secure within their extended school 'family'. Small class sizes allow close individual attention and every child has life-changing opportunities to achieve their full potential in the classroom, on the sports field and, perhaps most importantly, in their personal growth.

Home from Home

The accommodation and facilities are quite outstanding. Boarding houses are thoughtfully planned to provide a 'home-from-home' where children can stamp their own individuality with posters, photographs and toys and enjoy their free time playing games, table tennis or snooker, watching DVDs or simply listening to music or chatting with friends.



Music is part of the fabric of school life and the impressive new Music School is home to orchestras, bands, choirs and even rock groups. In addition, the School has a superb library, ICT suite, Art, Design & Technology Centre and the level of state-of-the-art resources you would expect to find in a leading independent school, all offering an amazing opportunity to children, many of whom might never have dreamed of having so much at their fingertips.

Beyond the classroom, 96 acres of playing fields, an all-weather pitch, extensive indoor and outdoor courts, a heated swimming pool, superb gymnasium and a nine-hole golf course offer plenty of scope to burn off youthful energy!

Celebrating Heritage

Uniquely, all pupils learn to sail in their first year, and the proud maritime tradition is celebrated when the whole school takes part in Divisions. All pupils wear naval uniform to these formal parades; spectacular events that generate tremendous pride in pupils and parents.

Headmaster Howard Blackett reflects this pride, "a good education lasts a lifetime and we are happy to see boys and girls leave us as unpretentious but confident accomplished young men and women, well prepared to face the challenges presented by a fast moving world. They emerge as free-thinkers, eager to learn more and embrace all that life has to offer."





The Royal Hospital School

Open Mornings

Saturday 1st October and
Saturday 12th November at 9.00am

Scholarships, Bursaries, and
Discounts for Services families

For more information visit:
www.royalhospitalschool.org
contact Admissions on **01473 326210**, or
email: **admissions@royalhospitalschool.org**

EDUCATION

West Hill Park
Preparatory School

Day and Boarding School for boys and girls 2½ - 13 years

Titchfield
Hampshire
PO14 4BS

Open Morning
Saturday 24 Sep 2011
10:00am - 12noon

Ofsted Outstanding 2010|2011

01329 842356 www.westhillpark.com

Kelly's link to admiral

KELLY College is a friendly, co-educational full, weekly boarding and day school, providing an excellent education. Children can achieve their true potential within a balanced and supportive environment, developing their individual talents.

The school has 350 students, of whom about half are boarders. It occupies a beautiful site in Devon, overlooking Dartmoor.

As an independent school it balances a high standard of academic schooling – in 2010 achieving an A Level pass rate of 100 per cent, grades A*-C – with a strong commitment to an extensive range of extra-curricular activities.

Kelly College, founded by Admiral Kelly in 1877, is proud of its 130 years of service to the RN..

Scottish home from home in Perthshire

QUEEN Victoria School is a co-educational boarding school which provides stable, uninterrupted and high-quality education for the children of Scottish Service personnel, or those who have served in Scotland.

Set in 45 acres of beautiful Perthshire countryside, Queen Victoria School is easily accessible by road, rail or air.

The children are aged between 10.5/11 and 18 (P7 to S6), the main intake being at Primary 7. The school offers its pupils a wide curriculum following the Scottish educational system.

Pupils also have the opportunity to study in a number of subjects for the Advanced Higher examinations.

Increasingly, pupils move on to Higher and Further Education but career links with the Services remain strong.

Pastoral care is given a very high priority along with careers guidance and personal and social education.

Queen Victoria School aims to provide a stable 'home from home' environment, promote the welfare and happiness of each individual child and develop their self-esteem.

In addition, there is a very full programme of sporting, cultural and spiritual development. The school prides itself on developing the pupils in the widest possible sense and aims to achieve success academically, in sport, music, drama and many other areas.

Thrive at West Hill Park

WEST Hill Park is a co-educational Day and Boarding school for pupils aged between 2½ and 13, situated in 25 acres of beautiful grounds between Southampton and Portsmouth.

The children enjoy a safe and secure environment with the opportunity to progress through the school on a single site.

Effort, enthusiasm and conduct are highly prized. The School exists to build and secure self-confidence in every child, so that all may progress as far as their capabilities and dreams will take them.

The school celebrates the individual: it is a place where every moment of childhood is savoured, and every child is seen in the light of his or her merits. At West Hill Park, children flourish.

Why a country school like Perrot Hill?

WHY a country prep school?

All too often one finds that the drive for academic rigour results in less time for games, the arts and break times.

It is Perrott Hill's view, however, that it is these activities that provide a balanced education.

If we are to instil a love of learning and to equip children with healthy bodies and enquiring minds, we must provide them with the opportunity to experience the outdoors, the arts and regular games.

These help to build individuals who are excited about school, who jump out of bed in the morning and look forward to the day ahead.

The school has dedicated staff who challenge the children in the classroom and throughout the many different facets of school life; there is much truth in the old adage that one "wins one's battles outside of the classroom" and whilst the school is lucky in that it has few battles to fight, it always pays to be well prepared.

The school strives to find something that each and every child can excel in, be it academic, sporting or artistic and, when they achieve success, the children feel good about themselves, they walk tall and, as a result, they perform well in all aspects of school life.

Perrott Hill encourages the children to use the woods and grounds.

Academics are of course paramount as it is how senior schools and universities measure success.

However, the school strives to develop children who have the desire to learn throughout their lives rather than being infatuated with examination results alone.

This may all sound like pining for the halcyon days of the past and, whilst that is not exactly accurate, there is a degree of truth in this statement.

There was more time and space and we allowed children to be children, rather than pressurising them into being young adults; an ideal that country prep schools still aspire to.

And how does this affect the children?

They appreciate how lucky they are, they want to come to school and they want to learn. They are rounded, kind and well-mannered and enjoy an ideal start to life.

You can't afford not to visit Taunton's most inspiring school



Open Morning: Saturday 8th October 9.30am - 12.00 noon
Sixth Form Evening: Thursday 3rd November 6.00pm - 8.00pm
Telephone: 01823 340830 • www.queenscollege.org.uk

QUEEN'S COLLEGE

Perrott Hill
Time and space for a full education



A boarding and day preparatory school for girls and boys from 3 -13.
Please contact the school for Open Morning dates.
Perrott Hill, North Perrott, Crewkerne, Somerset TA18 7SL
visit us at: www.perrotthill.com or call us on: 01460 72051

Raising to Distinction



Queen Victoria School

Open Morning
Sat 17 September 2011

QVS is a co-educational boarding school for children of Armed Forces personnel who are Scottish, have served in Scotland or are part of a Scottish regiment.

Families are welcome to find out more at our Open Morning, or by contacting Admissions on
+44 (0) 131 310 2927
to arrange a visit.

Queen Victoria School
Dunblane Perthshire
FK15 0JY
www.qvs.org.uk

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE



Visit our Open Afternoon
on Saturday 1st October from 1.00pm to 4.00pm

Consistently high academic results
A wide range of extra-curricular activities
An ideal balance of Boarding & Day Pupils
Kelly College Preparatory School for ages 3-11
Kelly College for ages 11-18

For more details please contact our Registrar, Kirsten Bailey on 01822 813193 or email: registrar@kellycollege.com
kellycollege.com
for more information and to download a prospectus

preparation for life

Two centuries of the Duke

THE Duke of York's Royal Military School is a unique full boarding school with a proud 200-year history of educating the children of Armed Forces families.

Located amidst extensive grounds near Dover it combines traditional values, a military ethos and outstanding academic results with modern teaching and sports facilities as well as a new £9.5m 6th form boarding house.

Sports facilities include a swimming pool, gym, running track, rugby and cricket pitches set amidst the Academy's own 150-acre grounds.

The school, which became an Academy last year, will gain additional funding this year to upgrade other boarding houses, ICT and other facilities. Becoming an Academy has been an historic turning point for the school which will retain its military ethos that fosters leadership, social responsibility and a supportive peer-group community.

Academically the Academy is second to none. Students this year celebrated 100 per cent GCSE pass rate in A*-C grades (97 per cent including Maths and English) with 86 per cent going on to university.

The Academy boasts an impressive alumni. Many students follow in their parents' footsteps and join the Armed Forces at officer level while becoming leaders within their professions and valued members of their communities.

Students enjoy a high quality of pastoral care and a supportive boarding community among teachers and children who understand military life.

Many of the teachers have previously served in the Armed Forces and students take part in the Cadet Force of their choice under the supervision of a RSM as well as travelling abroad with the Duke of Edinburgh programme.

For more information go to www.doyrms.com.

Mr Best brings out the best at St John's

WITH the arrival of a new Headmaster, and two inspections, it's been a busy year at St John's College, the Southsea-based Christian independent, co-educational school for pupils aged two to 18.

Shortly after Headmaster Mr Graham Best started at the school in September last year, the school's Boarding facilities were inspected by Ofsted.

The report confirmed that "boarders were extremely positive about their experience at the school" and acknowledged that "the support offered to the children and opportunities for enrichment are of an outstanding quality". The school was also praised for relationships between staff and pupils – in the report one boarder commented: "It's like a sleep-over every night with your friends."

Later in the year the School was inspected by the Independent Schools' Inspectorate (ISI). In the report the pastoral care and the relationships between staff and pupils were acknowledged as being of a very high standard in a "relaxed and mutually respectful atmosphere."

Meanwhile the quality of pupils' achievements was judged "good", both in terms of academic work and extracurricular activities, and the report confirmed: "The quality of teaching is good overall and some teaching is excellent."

Mr Graham Best, Headmaster, commented: "I was very pleased with both the Ofsted and ISI reports; they gave a fair and realistic assessment of St John's, recognising our strengths but also reaffirming a few areas for development – on which we are already working."

Looking forward to the new academic year ahead there is a certain buzz of excitement at the school. With the introduction of a new Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) and the launch of a new-look website and prospectus in October it promises to be another exciting year at St John's.

Prospective parents are invited to attend the School's Open Morning on Saturday October 8 from 10am to 12:30pm. Contact the School Office on 0845 269 8827 (local rate number) to book.

Forging ahead at Shebbear

SHEBBEAR College continues in its belief that it is the 'Best Small School in the South West' and is continuing to build on its already impressive infrastructure.

Recent years have seen improvements right across the school.

Not only have all of the teaching areas been subject to considerable investment but the addition of a full size all-weather-pitch as well as a professional standard cardiovascular suite; dance studio and weights room, have ensured that our sporting facilities are exceptional.

Work has started on the new build onto the existing Junior School with the addition of an assembly hall, and three new classrooms are due to open this month.

The Kindergarten has been redeveloped and now boasts one of the best facilities in the South West.

On the music front a new Recital Room will complement the already-successful choir and the music technology lab is benefiting from the addition of 22 new Apple-Mac computers for state-of-the-art composing.

The school currently has its highest number of pupils in 18 years and still has waiting lists for some year groups.

Sixth Form scholarships and bursaries are available for consideration.

Contact Mrs Sarah Lindley on 01409 282001 or registrar@shebbearcollege.co.uk.

Queen's College cycle challenge

QUEEN'S College Sports teacher Philip Mann is facing the challenge of a lifetime as he gears up to ride 900 miles in nine days on his bicycle, visiting all nine Royal Marines bases in the UK.

Philip, 48, is usually seen blowing his whistle on the sports field at Queen's College in Taunton but in August as *Navy News* went to press he plans to get astride his bike and start an epic 900-mile ride starting in Arbroath and finishing at 40 Commando in Taunton and raising money for the Royal Marines Charitable Trust Fund.

"I used to ride my bike 500 metres from home to work but now I've had to up the mileage a bit in preparation for the physical effort of riding 100 miles a day and the inevitable effect on the softer parts of my anatomy!" said Philip.

"The pupils are now getting used to seeing me whizzing along on my bright red and white bike before and after school."

The hard work will all be worthwhile for Philip if he succeeds in raising his target of £5,000 for the Royal Marines Charitable Trust Fund. A number of Philip's former pupils at Queen's College in Taunton have served, or are serving in Afghanistan and Philip has been touched by their stories.

A former Army soldier himself, he played rugby for Leicester Tigers before becoming a teacher, and has previously stayed fit by running.

"When I was younger, I raised money for charity by running in marathons but after recently having both hips replaced, my surgeon suggested I get on my bike to get fit again."

You can sponsor Philip by visiting www.justgiving.com/philipmann and the money will go directly to the Royal Marines Charitable Trust Fund.

SHEBBEAR COLLEGE

Educating the Individual Since 1841
Ages 3 to 18 Years
Strong Christian & Family Values
Excellent Academic Results
Challenging Extra-Curricular Activities
Outstanding Pastoral Care

OPEN WEEK
Monday 10th - Friday 14th October 2011

Contact Mrs Sarah Lindley on 01409 282001
E-mail: registrar@shebbearcollege.co.uk



Shebbear College, Shebbear, Beaworthy, North Devon EX21 5HJ
Telephone: 01409 282001
Email: info@shebbearcollege.co.uk www.shebbearcollege.co.uk

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Generous Forces Allowance

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Entry at all ages 9 - 18 years

Just off junction 26 on the M5

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admin@wellington-school.org.uk

ST JOHN'S COLLEGE
SOUTHSEA

A CHRISTIAN CO-EDUCATIONAL DAY AND BOARDING SCHOOL FOR AGES 2 - 18

VISIT US ON OUR
OPEN MORNING

The Headmaster will speak at 10am, followed by pupil tours around the site so you can see our school in action.

SATURDAY 8 OCTOBER
10.00am – 12.30pm

"My son enjoys his time at St John's so much so that he can't wait for term time to begin. The relaxed but homely boarding environment means that I feel happy leaving him."
Parent

"The boarding provision within the school is excellent."
Independent Schools Inspectorate



ST JOHN'S COLLEGE NURSERY 2-4 YEARS | ST JOHN'S COLLEGE LOWER SCHOOL | ST JOHN'S COLLEGE SENIOR SCHOOL | ST JOHN'S COLLEGE SIXTH FORM | ST JOHN'S COLLEGE BOARDING SCHOOL

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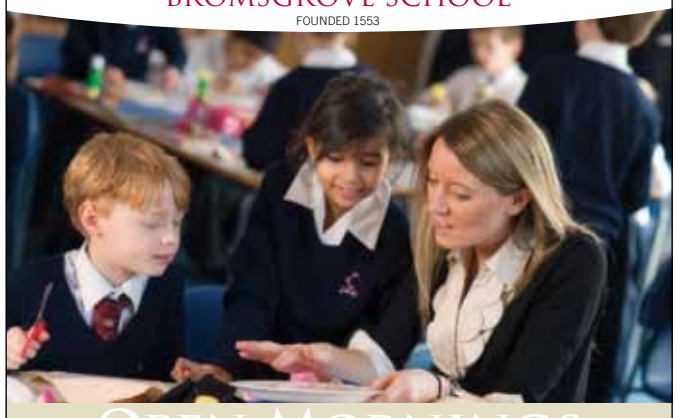
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EDUCATION

FLAIR • DISCIPLINE • ACADEMIC RIGOUR

BROMSGROVE SCHOOL
FOUNDED 1553



OPEN MORNINGS

Senior School (13+): October 1st

Preparatory School, (Years 6, 7 & 8): October 8th

Preparatory School, (Years 3, 4 & 5): October 15th

Heart of England location. Over 400 full time boarders.
Academic excellence coupled with a wealth of sporting and extra-curricular opportunities.
International Baccalaureate and A levels offered.
Major investment in prep boarding facilities due for completion in 2012.

Generous Forces' Bursaries available.

490 pupils aged 7 - 13, 890 pupils aged 13 - 18

Telephone: 01527 579679
email: admissions@bromsgrove-school.co.uk
www.bromsgrove-school.co.uk

Beauty in breadth at Bromsgrove

WE had a long debate over "Breadthellence," *admits Bromsgrove School*. None of us was Californian so we didn't go for it, but, frankly, it's as good a word as any to describe the offer of one of Britain's oldest and largest independent schools.

Utterly dedicated to the individual pupil, despite its size, Bromsgrove shuns public school drones and instead looks to produce creative citizens with a strong moral compass and a dash of pizzazz to boot.

We are currently halfway through the biggest build programme in the school's 500-year history, and although buildings are not the be all and end all (great teachers should be able to run a super school in a pig sty), Bromsgrove's facilities are being enhanced on an unprecedented and truly spectacular scale.

OFSTED are bound by the vocabulary of apparatchik convention, but last year they once again gave us their highest accolade: "outstanding".

The Good Schools Guide, less prosaically, says we "inhabit the academic stratosphere" and lauds our titanic extra curricular programme as one of the finest it has seen, while the *Tatler's Good School Guide* called us a "Great school… with a fantastically global perspective." And so on.

But it's all froth on a marketeer's daydream unless the pupils are happy, focused and keen to make a difference for the better.

They are. One thousand six hundred of them from two to 18 years old. Thirteen hundred are British but another 300 from 35 nations around the world make Bromsgrove unique.

Ancient but as contemporary as tomorrow, Bromsgrove's scope is staggering: from A level to the International Baccalaureate, day to boarding, the arts to sport, pupils can soar.

Friendly, engaging and – despite its ranking – not driven by league tables, Bromsgrove is a local, national and international centre of learning. You will receive the warmest of welcomes should you visit.

As a footnote: Tatler also called us "a breath of fresh air." We liked that.

And we hope you will too.

APPLEFORD SCHOOL
a unique path to success

Is your child Dyslexic?

The MoD may pay all our fees through the Special Educational Needs Allowance (SENA)



A co-educational day and boarding school for children with dyslexia and associated learning difficulties.

Call: 01980 621020
www.applefordschool.org
Shrewton, Near Salisbury, Wiltshire, SP3 4HL

Appleford's expertise in dyslexia

APPLEFORD School was established in 1988 by two experts in the field: Gerald Trump, who founded the first school for dyslexic children in the UK; and Dr Peter Gardner, a highly-qualified and experienced psychologist and psychotherapist.

Appleford's aim is to provide a high-quality education for children aged seven to 14 with dyslexia and associated learning difficulties to include dyscalculia, dyspraxia, ASD and ADHD.

To this end the school only accepts children with an appropriate assessment from an Educational Psychologist and/or a statement of special educational needs.

The school is a co-educational day and boarding school, and warmly welcomes applications from children of families in the Services.

Appleford wants its children to realise their full potential and to develop self-respect, self-reliance and self-discipline.

The school aspires to return children to mainstream education where possible.

RECRUITMENT



100% NEW

NEW LIFESTYLE. NEW ADVENTURES. NEW ZEALAND. NAVY



NAVY
ROYAL NEW ZEALAND NAVY

We are recruiting now! There are vacancies in a variety of branches, especially Electronic Warfare Specialists (Leading Hand), Marine Engineering Specialisation (Petty Officer & Lieutenant), Hydrographic (Leading Hand, Petty Officer, & Chief Petty Officer), Communications Operators (Leading Hand), & Divers (Leading Hand - Petty Officer). Visit our website for more information: www.navy.mil.nz/join-us/uk

SEA CADETS

First for Hastings RM cadet

A ROYAL Marines Cadet from **Hastings** branch has become the first of his kind to become a Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports Cadet.

Cpl Alex Bryant attended the induction ceremony at Walmer Castle, at Deal, where Admiral the Lord Boyce presented him with the cutlass and badge that go with the accolade.

The post of the Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports dates from at least the 12th century but may be even older.

The Lord Warden was originally in charge of the Cinque (pronounced "sink") Ports, a group of five port towns on the South Coast – Hastings, Romney, Hythe, Dover and Sandwich.

Today 14 towns belong to the Cinque Ports confederation, and the title is one of the higher honours bestowed by the Sovereign.

Recent Lord Wardens have included Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother and Sir Winston Churchill.

Admiral the Lord Boyce is a former First Sea Lord and Chief of the Defence Staff, and was appointed Lord Warden in July 2004.

Any Sea Cadet living, studying or being a member of a unit within any of the 14 member towns of the Confederation (the original five plus Rye, Winchelsea, Deal, Ramsgate, Faversham, Folkestone, Margate, Lydd and Tenterden) is eligible to be nominated for appointment as a Lord Warden's Cadet, providing support at ceremonial events in connection with the Cinque Ports.

Cake for a birthday

JUNIOR Sea Cadets from all over **Eastern Area** gathered over a weekend in late June for their annual regatta – and took the opportunity to celebrate 155 years of the Sea Cadet Corps.

The Juniors' Regatta is a highlight of the Eastern Area calendar with cadets taking part in a range of activities including sailing, rowing and team-building at Girton Sailing Club.

Prizes were awarded on the Sunday by the Deputy Area Officer, Cdr Stuart Watt.

Then the party got under way, with a barbecue, commemorative cards and a birthday cake.

New start and fond farewell

STONEHAVEN unit has gained British Rowing accreditation, allowing its instructors to train and assess adults and youngsters in the Explore Rowing awards.

Courses will be run in the new Corps Trinity 500 (fixed seat) and Yoles (sliding seat) boats, allowing students to achieve both Sea Cadet and British Rowing qualifications locally for the first time.

Stonehaven already has Royal Yachting Association status, meaning the unit can offer a wide range of activities afloat.

Stonehaven has also recently bid farewell to their President, Lord Arbuthnott, who retired after 35 years' service to the Corps.

He is succeeded by unit Vice President John Smart, the former Lord Lieutenant of Kincardineshire.

Classic event

CADETS from **Caterham** unit assisted in and helped to promote a summer concert in the town.

The 'Classic Summer Evening', held in the grounds of The Chalet on Tupwood Lane, organised by the Tandridge Community Fund, raised money for three local charities, and showcased local music students in the afternoon as well as classical performers during the evening.



● *Sea Cadets from* **Tewkesbury** *unit present film of the 1950s destroyer HMS Diamond's launch and trials to Cdr Ian Clarke, Commanding Officer the new Type 45 warship in Portsmouth*

Gem of a discovery

JUST as the Royal Navy's newest Type 45 destroyer HMS Diamond was declared operational – as reported in last month's *Navy News* – film footage of her earlier namesake has surfaced showing her launch and sea trials in 1950.

On reading about the commissioning of the new HMS Diamond, the Commanding Officer of **Tewkesbury** unit, Lt Cdr (SCC) Jason Konhorn RNR, wrote to Diamond's CO, Cdr Ian Clarke, about artefacts concerning the previous Diamond that came into his possession years ago.

In 2004 a friend of the unit who worked in a local nursing home had come across a handful of naval-related possessions from a resident who had died.

That resident was thought to have been Lady Denny, wife of the late Admiral Sir Michael Denny, who had died in 1972.

Lady Denny had been the Lady Sponsor of HMS Diamond in 1950, launching the destroyer at the John Brown yard on Clydebank – not far from where the current ship was built.

The Tewkesbury cadets had looked after 16mm film footage of the launch and trials as well as a ship's badge and other memorabilia from Admiral Denny's distinguished career.

Having joined the Royal Navy in 1913 he became Fleet Gunnery Officer, and during World War 2 he was Chief Staff Officer for the evacuation from Dunkirk before becoming CO of aircraft carrier HMS Victorious in the Pacific.

Admiral Denny later went on to become Third Sea Lord and Controller of the Navy from 1949-53, then CINC Home Fleet.

He finished his career as the UK representative on the NATO Military Committee.

Visiting the new destroyer in Portsmouth Naval Base, Lt Cdr Kinghorn said: "These items are of great historical value and should be retained by the current serving HMS Diamond."

A trophy and more honours

THE cadets of **Northampton and Wellingborough** unit, along with the **Rushden Diamond Division**, welcomed Flag Officer Scotland, Northern England and Northern Ireland (FOSNNI) to their training ship for a very special ceremony.

Rear Admiral Martin Alabaster dropped by to present the unit with the Canada Trophy, given annually to the best Sea Cadet unit.

The trophy was first presented to the Corps in 1948 by the Navy League of Canada, and is awarded to the unit judged by the Captain Sea Cadets – currently Capt Mark Windsor – to represent the very best of what the Corps is about.

There followed a number of other presentations, which came as surprises to the cadets.

The Royal British Legion presented a certificate of affiliation in recognition of the partnership between the Legion and cadets over many years.

Each cadet also received an individual medal from the Admiral in recognition of the Canada Trophy success.

And the final surprise was an announcement by the Mayor of Northampton, Cllr Jamie Lane, that the unit will be given the Freedom of the Borough of Northampton, an honour reserved for few organisations – and believed to be a first for a Sea Cadet unit.



Picture: Jenny Francis

Diverse attractions at Horsea Lake

CADETS and school pupils have been taking a closer look at the Defence Diving School at Horsea Island in Portsmouth Harbour.

A group of 40 members of the **Combined Cadet Force (RN)** from around the country dropped in as part of their annual summer camp at HMS Excellent.

They were introduced to diving training and learnt about the different courses, equipment used and even had the chance to try on some of the gear, under the supervision of AB(D) Rimmer.

They rounded off the visit with a tour of the Fleet Diving Squadron, hosted by LS(D) Lacy, where they were shown bomb disposal equipment as well as meeting serving personnel and learning about the role of RN diver.

The following week it was the turn of pupils at Purbrook Park School in Waterlooville, just north of Portsmouth, to visit the Defence Diving School for a team-building and leadership training day.

Almost 50 students from Year 10 – aged 14 and 15 – formed four teams to compete in military-themed activities such as orienteering, first aid and sports, and all had the opportunity to enjoy a swim in Horsea Lake.

The winning team took the Top Fin trophy.



● *Walton-on-the-Naze cadets perform a hornpipe at St Mary's Church, Frinton-on-Sea*

Walton juniors hit the ground running

WALTON-on-the-Naze Juniors enjoyed a jam-packed weekend, from rock-climbing at Essex University to staging a hornpipe routine for Sea Sunday.

The Juniors have hit the ground running, with the Section only having started in January.

The Officer in Charge of the Junior Section, PO (SCC) Lesley Monk, and her team took 25 cadets to the University of Essex's indoor rock-climbing wall after fundraising facilitator Rosie Hatt raised over £1,200 for the visit.

Walton Senior cadets who have helped with the Junior section were also invited to attend – the Senior cadets have certainly taken to the Juniors, who parade separately on a Wednesday evening.

A 'Big Cadet, Little Cadet' relationship has proved invaluable in teaching younger children the fundamentals of a Sea Cadet parade night.

The following day, 25 Walton Junior and Senior cadets attended the Sea Sunday Service, when St Mary's Church at Frinton-on-Sea was transformed into the deck of HMS Victory with a panoramic life-size backdrop, created by unit CO Lt (SCC) Gary Dodd RNR.

The cadets helped unit padre Don Smith, a Newhaven Sea Cadet in his youth, to put on a lively service – the Juniors entertained the congregation with a full Hornpipe dance routine down the aisle, and cadets also delivered some of the readings.

A launch and a link

THE launch of **Chippenham** unit's new Trinity 500 boat also marked the formal affiliation between the unit and a military establishment.

Capt Jamie Hay, senior RN captain at MOD Corsham, used a bottle of bubbly to launch the Royal Arthur *(above)* – the name of the former petty officer training establishment at Corsham.

During his visit Capt Hay enjoyed a ripple rifle display (put together in a matter of weeks by PO(SCC) Wayne Doman) and a concert by the unit's band.

The launch ceremony was the highlight of the evening, and as the boat slipped into the River Avon, a wave of applause from parents and VIPs accompanied the rolling drums as the band struck up *Heart of Oak*.

Later, helped by LC Lisa Evans, and with ceremonial sword in hand, the unit's RN liaison officer Lt Rose cut a cake baked in honour of the occasion.

Unit 1st Lt Robby Allen said: "Capt Hay thanked the ship's company for the splendid turnout, praising their fortitude and professionalism in the face of heavy rain."

Aylesbury welcome the Duck

AYLESBURY unit officially launched and named its new Trinity pulling boat on Watermead Lake at an event attended by around 100 supporters.

From a low point in 2004, when the unit had barely a handful of cadets, Aylesbury has grown to a thriving outfit numbering 55 cadets, and now includes a new 15-strong junior section.

The launch event was a family BBQ run by the newly-formed Parents and Supporters Association – hopefully the first of many such occasions which help promote the unit and raise funds to cover running costs.

The boat's name, Aylesbury Duck, was chosen by staff from suggestions submitted by cadets, who had to choose a maritime theme or a local connection.

The joint winners were JC1 Medhurst and Cdt Read, who each won £10 for their suggestion.

The boat was duly christened on a somewhat showery day with a bottle of fizz in traditional style.

JC Medhurst, the unit's youngest cadet, said: "I'm pleased we have a name that tells people where we're from," while LC Heidi Smith added: "We no longer have to travel to Oxford and use another unit's boats – at last we have our own identity and rowing on our doorstep."



● *Aylesbury cadets with their new pulling boat Aylesbury Duck on Armed Forces Day*

The unit extended thanks to Mr Pardis of the Riviera Restaurant for permission to hold the BBQ on his land, and to Dage Ltd and the William Harding Trust for the generous donations which made it possible to buy the boat, launch trailer and road trailer.

Medics call on Methil

CADETS from **Methil** unit enjoyed a visit from 231 Evac Sqn, part of the Army's 225 Medical Regt (Volunteers), based in the TA Centre, Glenrothes.

They arrived with a fully kitted out field ambulance and took their time in showing the cadets all the equipment and its uses.

The cadets got the chance to wear the standard backpack the Army team have to carry in the field, and it wasn't long before they realised it was a lot heavier than it looked.

"The backpack is huge and really heavy – I almost landed on the ground when I tried to carry it," said Junior Cadet Mia Dair.

"The ambulance is amazing. I have never seen one before – they have got everything in there," said Junior Cadet Jack Thomson.

Parents and families of the Junior Cadets also visited the unit as the youngsters were awarded certificates for water safety, swimming test and completing the red section for unit activities.

Four cadets also received promotion to Junior Sea Cadet 2nd Class and Cadet Natalie Dobbie received her paddle sport badge for completing 15 hours paddling.

Five out of five

NOTTINGHAM unit scored five out of five when it sent a handful of cadets to the district advancement board.

All five returned with passes, three of them notching up credit passes.

The board consisted of command tasks, drill and dress assessments and delivering a short lesson to the other candidates.

LCs Palmer, Pooler, Edwards and Marks achieved their Leading Cadet rate, alongside LC Hendry, who achieved a credit for his PO Cadet advancement (which is awaiting confirmation).

PO (SCC) Carter began their training in January this year, working the candidates hard, and they are now set to join the senior cadet team at Nottingham alongside LC Filsell and POC Lena Urbacz, who has recently attended the International Exchange to Canada.

Reservist tells of deployment

MEMBERS of **Thornbury** unit welcomed Lt Cdr Rod Drake RNR, of HMS Flying Fox, who spoke to cadets about the role of the Royal Navy in anti-piracy operations off Somalia.

Lt Cdr Drake, a civilian project manager with the Ministry of Defence, was deployed off the Horn of Africa earlier this year, and shared his own personal experiences as well as giving a wider perspective.

The unit's OiC, CPO (SCC) Rob Umfreville, said he was delighted that Thornbury's association with Flying Fox continued to flourish.

Grampian wins

STONEHAVEN cadets celebrated after scooping a clutch of trophies and medals at the Northern Area sailing regatta, held at South Queensferry on the Forth, and the area rowing regatta at Greenock on the Clyde.

With wins in the Topper (top three places) and Pico, plus the Boys' Open and Boys' Junior rowing, the unit helped Grampian district to win both regattas.

Other Grampian winners were Peterhead (Bosun) and the Girls' Open rowers.

All winners go on to the national regattas in London and Southport this month – the 51st consecutive year that Stonehaven has represented the area at the Nationals.

Cambridge are bang in form

CAMBRIDGE unit once again travelled to Bisley for the annual Inter-Service Cadet Rifle Meeting shooting against the Army Cadet Force, Air Training Corps and the Royal Canadian Army Cadets.

They also competed for the Sea Cadet Corps National Fullbore competitions – and the team won the following national and inter-Service trophies:

SCC Trophies: Sea Cadet National Fullbore competition – 1st (winning the Tipner Trophy); Sea Cadet National Individual Competition – 1st PCI Sam Barrett (winning the Courtney Cup), 3rd LC Jess Markham, 4th LC Jess Rogers); Sea Cadet National Tipner Coach – Lt (SCC) Andrew Freestone RNR (winning the Tipner coach trophy).

Bisley Trophies and awards: PCI Sam Barrett, LC Jess Rogers and LC Jess Markham all achieved a cadet 100 (Sam was 20th, Jess Markham 84th and Jess Rogers 99th) out of 506 cadets; PCI Sam Barrett was the highest placed Sea Cadet in the Cadet 100 – winning the Navy League Cup; PCI Barratt was the highest-placed Sea Cadet in the Grand Aggregate, winning the Squire Trophy; the team were the highest-placed Sea Cadet team in the Frankfort match, winning the Sheerness trophy – they were 10th overall, only seven points away from first place.

All four team members – PPO Stefan Le Roux, PCI Barrett, LC Rogers and LC Markham – were selected to represent the Sea Cadet Corps in the Somerset Cup top 16 Inter-Service Match; all of them were in the 'A' team therefore making up 25 per cent of the Somerset team and all gaining Corps Colours;

LC Jess Rogers was the top Sea Cadet shot in the Somerset Team.

Cambridge took away six trophies from Bisley this year and won every single ISCRM award that is available to the SCC.

Unit 1st Lt CPO (SCC) Angie Maynard and CO Lt (SCC) Amanda O'Donoghue RNR, who travelled to Bisley and stayed for the weekend, said: "We are so proud of them and their achievements – it has been an awesome weekend."

Lt Freestone, who has coached Cambridge teams at Bisley since the early 1990s, said: "It is one of the proudest moments in my time as a Sea Cadet coach winning the trophy named after a former HQSO, Lt Cdr (SCC) John Mahoney RNR, who was a brilliant mentor."

Luke owes it to the Corps

SINCE joining the Sea Cadet Corps I have never looked back, *writes Luke Finnigan (pictured right), now starting a career with the RFA.*

And when I think about it some of my best memories are from my time in the Corps.

I owe a lot to the Sea Cadets – being a cadet has helped shaped my life in so many varied ways; self-discipline, leadership, respect, and confidence to name a few.

But most of all with the guidance from my fellow cadets, officers and instructors, I became a good citizen and role model to fellow young people in the local community.

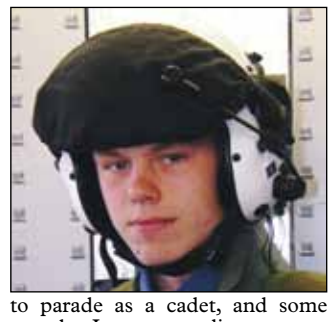
I'll never forget the sense of pride, belonging, enthusiasm and teamwork that drove my unit, **Huyton with Roby** – the unit was my second family; we were that close even ex-cadets who are now at sea would still call in and share their experiences with us.

I had excellent instructors who gave a lot of time for me and the unit as a whole. They should be very proud of the training that they provide to young people, giving the next generation of seafarers a head start in life.

The area in which I grew up was a deprived area with a high crime and drugs rate, and this sort of lifestyle is common and easy to fall into. I was often getting into trouble with the police and my attendance at school was poor, and I left without any qualifications.

Then I joined the Sea Cadets.

I never missed the chance



to parade as a cadet, and some months I was attending courses nearly every evening and weekend.

Unit instructors encouraged me to enrol on the Cadet Vocational Qualification Organisation (CVQO) BTEC in Public Services, and the Corps changed my attitude towards learning – I gained two nationally-recognised qualifications, a BTEC and an ILM team-leading certificate. I also achieved my Duke of Edinburgh's award.

These gained me a place in college to resit my GCSEs and I now plan to continue my studies whilst at sea through the Marine Society's College of the Sea.

My time in the cadets has taught me the importance of education and proven to me that anything is possible when you are willing to put in the time and effort.

Through the sea cadets many young people get there first taste of life at sea, either in one of the SCC offshore vessels, HM Ships, RFAs or various merchant vessels, and most units are affiliated to ships in the Fleet and share strong relations.

The training was challenging and character-building, but at the same time fun. The experience gained has played and continues to play a huge part on shaping me as an individual as I grow up.

My first experience at sea was in TS Royalist, the Sea Cadet flagship – hard work, but I would do it all again.

It gave me a real buzz and a huge sense of self-belief whilst at the same time motivating not only myself but others to get involved.

It is great to see young people learn and develop through naval and nautical traditions.

Sea Cadets helped me to build myself into a confident young man with the ability to meet life's goals and achieve my lifetime ambition.

During my Sea Cadet career, I feel that I have gained more experiences and taken part in many life-changing challenges than some people will fulfil within their lifetime.

These experiences, I believe, have made me the person I am today – and at times I wonder whether I would be serving in the RFA today without these experiences.

But one of the most notable dates in my career was being selected as one of five top cadets in the UK, winning the prestigious Duke of Westminster Award.

I have met some amazing people around the country – in fact around the world, as the furthest I have been yet is South Africa with the Corps.

I and some of my fellow cadets who are either at university, serving in the RN, Merchant Navy or have good career plans ashore, have proven that hard work and dedication from the adult volunteers pays off.

It is surprising how much you get around whilst being a cadet.

Having lunches with the First Sea Lord and high-ranking officers, meeting numerous celebrities, acting as part of Royal guards of honour, invitations to both Buckingham Palace and 10 Downing Street, appearing on national TV, radio and even getting the chance to go as far as Hong Kong, South Africa, Canada and Australia – you never knew what opportunities would arise, whether it be flying with the Fleet Air Arm, diving, parading down the Mall in front of hundreds of people, or just simply taking the helm of a ship.

I don't think people realise how much is on offer in the Cadets.

In its 157th year the Sea Cadet Corps is going stronger than ever – and in today's challenging society the Corps is still providing young people with various branch specialisation training ranging from logistics to seamanship, engineering to communications, music, boating, offshore sailing, damage control, sea survival and meteorology – the list goes on.

But the great thing is, at the same time you are earning nationally-recognised qualifications.

It's fair to say that the Corps put me on the straight and narrow, and without Sea Cadets I wouldn't have the good career I have in the Royal Fleet Auxiliary today.



● *Abigail Sanders, of* **Hoylake** *unit, on her way to winning the Laser Pico title at the North West Area regatta*

Boating station launched

SEA Cadets across the **North West** and beyond now have access to top-notch facilities at Crosby Lakeside Adventure Centre thanks to a new partnership.

Residential training facilities are now available in the Crosby Coastal Park to units in the area – and across the UK – where they can gain qualifications in paddle sports, sailing, windsurfing and power boating – and the centre also features a climbing wall.

Some 60 cadets challenged for honours at the area sailing regatta, with the winners going forward to the national finals.

Winners included: Open Bosun: Cdts Bishop and Collins (**Wallasey** unit); Open Laser Pico: Cdt Sanders (**Hoylake**); Junior Topper: Cdt Naden (**Buxton**), Portsmouth Yardstick: Cdt Staples-Jones (**Bury**), rowing boat handling: **Fleetwood** and **Barrow-in-Furness** tied; sailing boat handling: **Barrow-in-Furness**; power boat handling: **Workington** and **Maryport and Solway** tied.

Near neighbour pays a rare visit

SOUTHWARK unit is located within a mile of Sea Cadet HQ in Lambeth Road, South-East London.

Yet the cadets have not had the opportunity to welcome the Captain Sea Cadets to TS Cossack for many years.

That was put right when Capt Mark Windsor visited, along with members of the Tallow Chandlers Company, one of the 105 City of London Livery Companies.

The company was represented by the Master, Robert Pick, and his wife, along with former Master Ian Bowden.

The Southwark cadets provided a very polished piping party, guard, buglers and band display, which was followed by the presentation of numerous achievements and awards, including a 3rd BTEC, Engineering, to unit First Lieutenant PO George Whitfield and silver Duke of Edinburgh Award to LC Callum Malone.

Capt Windsor presented both the 2010 and 2011 burgees to the tallest cadet, AC Joshua McBride, and promised to call in more frequently – in part to see the progress of Joshua's ever-expanding collection of cap tallies.

In under six months Joshua has collected around 300 tallies, so if anyone out there would like to contribute a unit ribbon or has an odd tally which could be added, please send it c/o Southwark's OiC, Lt (SCC) David Bradbury RNR.

Not content with his collection, Joshua has also been showing off his musical talents, winning a gold medal in the solo bugler category at the London Area band competition, hosted by **Kingston** unit.

Area Recreation Officer Lt Cdr Tony Loveridge commented on "an exceptional and splendid performance" whilst making the presentation.

At 14 Joshua is already quite a veteran with Sea Cadet performances including the National Children's Theatre, parades at Portsmouth Naval Base and various Livery Company functions; his next target is a place in the Sea Cadet Massed Band.

Text to support Llanelli

LLANELLI unit has introduced a new way for people to support their work by offering a new text messaging system.

In partnership with Vodafone and JustGiving, the unit can have between £1 and £10 donated in a single text message.

Unit spokesman Paul Jenkins said: "Every penny comes direct to us, and the text message itself is free; the donation will then come off your next bill or mobile credit."

It costs around £600 each month to keep the unit afloat, with almost all its running costs coming from public donations.

One of the biggest fund-raisers is the annual duck race, which raises thousands of pounds.

Text 70070 with the following message: *LLAN00* plus the amount you wish to donate – for example *LLAN00 £5* for a £5 donation.

Local MP Nia Griffith has visited the unit to see what the Sea Cadet Corps is up to.

Unit First Lieutenant Lt (SCC) Peter Killick RNR showed the MP around the unit, watching demonstrations by cadets, and talking to cadets and staff.

The VIP visitor also presented various awards and the unit's hard-earned pennant.

Llanelli branch of the RNA has again pledged a donation of £520 to fund two berths for Llanelli unit cadets on board TS Royalist.

OiC PO (SCC) Lucy Jenkins said: "The local RNA are fantastic to us, and give generously year after year.

"Without their support we would not be able to send these cadets on life-changing voyages."

Rooting for Tooting

A visit by the Captain Sea Cadets was just one cause for celebration at the **Tooting and Balham** unit.

Capt Mark Windsor, who was accompanied on the evening by Max Gladwyn, a Trustee of the Marine Society & Sea Cadets, made the presentation to the unit of the 2011 efficiency burgee.

The Captain also made a surprise presentation of the second clasp to the Cadet Forces Medal to the Officer in Charge, CPO (SCC) Denise Burton, on her completion of 24 years of service to the Corps.

CPO Burton has commanded the unit since 2003, during which time the unit has been awarded six burgees and one pennant.

A group of 21 cadets and six staff from Tooting and four cadets from **Edgware and Mill Hill** spent a weekend camping at Bentley Copse in Surrey.

During their stay cadets learned the rudiments of map-reading and undertook challenges on an assault course, in archery and on go-karts, as well as learning how to set up camp and cook *alfresco* (with and without Pot Noodles...)

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SEA CADETS

Big night for New Romney

THROUGHOUT the year **New Romney and District** unit, under the guidance of their commanders and trainers, works towards one particular night – the Royal Naval Unit Parade Night, when they are inspected by a senior officer and all the training hard work and discipline is examined.

This year, in the presence of the Mayor and Mayoress of New Romney, the Mayor of Lydd, Area President Chris Ledger and many other local dignitaries, parents and families, the cadets were inspected by Maj Andrew Henderson RM, Southern Deputy Area Officer.

After inspecting the guard of honour Maj Henderson spoke to each cadet in turn.

After the inspection two teams of cadets gave a display of carrying the parts of a field gun over obstacles; the guns were finally assembled in short order and fired.

Cadets then demonstrated dealing with field injuries and casualties – the two demonstrations were in no way connected...

The unit band then played with a wide range of music.

Having some time ago won the RNLI sandcastle-building competition, cadets presented a cheque for £280, raised through sponsorship, to representatives of the RNLI.

Ark link for Reigate

REIGATE unit have been presented with two framed pictures of HMS Ark Royal, together with other items of memorabilia including a copy of the speech made by the Queen at the launch of the carrier.

The items were presented by David Lodrick, who served in the ship as Fleet Master-at-Arms and also served in the Southern Area Sea Cadet Office.

Mr Lodrick told officers and cadets that he could think of no better place for these treasured items than Reigate, whose training ship bears the name Ark Royal.

The decommissioned carrier was the unit's adopted ship, and cadets and staff had made many trips to see her.

The connection between the Ark and Reigate dates back to the Armada, when Lord Howard of Effingham lived in Reigate Priory and acquired the Ship Ark Raleigh from Sir Walter Raleigh, changing the name to Ark Royal.

Top achiever

POC CHARLOTTE Robinson, of **Hereford** unit, has won the CVQO's ILM Achievement Award.

The awards recognise the most outstanding cadet from the four cadet forces – the CCF, the Sea Cadet Corps, the Army Cadet Force and the Air Training Corps.

Nine finalists were selected from 300 nominations, from over 20,000 eligible CVQO learners nationwide.

Although the top prize, the Duke of Westminster's Award, went to an air cadet, Charlotte's award put her in the handful of cadets at the top of the pile – and she also had a trip to South Africa to look forward to, part of the overall prize package.

First trophy

JARROW unit has its first district trophy under the guiding hand of LC Kyle.

In one of the highlights of the year so far, the Tyne and Wear unit took the honours in the Powerboat Handling regatta at Derwenthaugh Boat Station.

S/Lt (SCC) Peel RNR, the new officer in charge, said: "This was an excellent achievement by the cadets after a difficult year.

"I am so proud of them."

The team was travelling to Scotland to take on the rest of the **Northern Area** as *Navy News* went to press.

Scarborough engineers new course

SEVEN cadets from **Scarborough** unit gathered for a weekend Marine Engineering course.

This was the first such course run at the unit in 15 years, although cadets had been to other units and to the national centres for training in the past.

The cadets – five female and two male – were keen to learn this new specialization being offered locally.

The course was run by PO Ken Lomas, newly-appointed as Scarborough's engineering Instructor; PO Lomas is no stranger to engineering, having served in the Royal Navy as an engineer.

ASO MarE S/Lt David Nichol oversaw the course.

Although much of the time was spent in the classroom, a special treat had been arranged by the instructors – the cadets visited the Scarborough lifeboat station and were given their own special tour.

They were first shown round the inshore inflatable, with special interest in the 50hp outboard motor, before graduating to the Mersey-class offshore; here special attention was paid to the powerful turbo-diesel engine.

All the cadets worked hard throughout the days and evenings and were rewarded for their efforts with a pass; they are now firmly on the ladder in the engineering specialisation.

Officer-in-Charge CPO (SCC) Julie Davies congratulated the cadets and instructors, especially PO Lomas, for a successful first course, and hoped these were the first of many cadets to get their engineering badge.

Thames Fueller aids yacht in difficulty

SEA Cadets on board the **Thames Fueller** off the Essex coast got rather more training than they bargained for on a recent course.

The Sea Cadet crew were undertaking Day Skipper training when they were alerted to a yacht which had got into difficulties.

The 25ft Constance, with a crew of two adults and a child, was unable to make way against strong winds and surfing seas off the approach to Harwich Harbour.

A distress call was made by mobile phone, which was passed on to the Thames Fueller.

The Constance was found around two miles from her original reported position, and with a tow safely secured, the yacht was brought to the safety of the moorings in the backwaters of Walton-on-the-Naze.

Thames Fueller skipper Nick Moulton said: "The cadets did all the deck work in very difficult conditions.

"They were a credit to the Sea Cadet Corps."

A spokesman for HM Coastguard Thames Marine Rescue Coordination Centre said: "Without the timely and competent intervention of the cadet vessel this could easily have become very nasty situation for the yacht."

The 31ft Thames Fueller is supported by the Worshipful Company of Fuellers and operated by the **TS Rebel** Cadet Sea School at Walton-on-the-Naze.

Each year it provides more than 350 places to cadets from London and the surrounding counties – in 2009 cadets achieved more than 220 qualifications as well as 96 Duke of Edinburgh certificates.

The fact that Thames Fueller is relatively small makes her ideally suited to cadet training in terms of boat-handling skills – she has a maximum speed of 13.5kt, a range of over 450 miles and her rating means she can make voyages of up to 60 miles from safe haven, putting continental ports within her reach.



● *Southampton unit's female team in action on the Hamble River*

Hamble River challenge

WORD of the Sea Cadets' new Trinity 500 pulling boat is spreading, and led to a challenge to the **Southampton** unit.

The organisers of the annual River Raid race on the Hamble River, and the local Sea Scouts troop, challenged the Sea Cadets to take part in the seven-mile rowing race.

Challenge accepted, two teams from the unit arrived with two boats to take part, and the new Trinity 500 class for the race was born.

The female cadet crew finishing in 1h 26m, with their male counterparts finishing six minutes later; therefore the first winners of the T500 Trophy were the female Trinity 2 crew.

The eighth Hamble River Raid will be held in May 2012, and the organisers and Southampton unit are looking for more Trinity 500 challengers to join them and make the competition bigger.

If your unit is up for the challenge visit www.hambleriverraid.com for more details.

Gosforth girls beat their opponents – and weather

WHILE the rest of the country basked in a spell of glorious summer weather, the **Northern Area** rowing regatta was staged in high winds and driving rain at Greenock in Scotland.

But the weather posed few problems for the 12- and 13-year-olds who made up **Gosforth** unit's junior girls team – Cdts Bowman, Herbert, Garside, Jordan and Grey, who rowed to victory and were presented with their winners' trophy by temporary area officer Cdr Giles RN.

The unit's medal haul was increased by the junior boys' Trinity 500 and junior Yole teams, who both finished second and gave **Northumberland** District a very satisfying second place overall.

Gosforth's CO, CPO (SCC) Chris Healy, said it was a fantastic achievement by his young crew, and they were already back on the Tyne preparing for the National Combined Regatta this month.

Good show all round

FINCHLEY unit were celebrating a month of sporting success as well as their annual RN Inspection.

The London Area unit's athletics team put on a good show in the London Northern District competition.

And there were first places in both the boys' and girls' canoeing competitions.

Guest of honour at the parade night was the Lord Mayor of the City of London, Alderman Michael Bear, who congratulated the unit on their achievements and their enduring enthusiasm.

The Lord Mayor and other VIP guests – which included Deputy Lord Lieutenant of London Martin Russell and the Chairman of the Institute of Seamanship, John Johnson-Allen – were treated to a number of displays and demonstrations, including a race based on seamanship skills which involved the safe transportation of an egg, and a drill display which showed why the Finchley Armed Guard won the District drill competition earlier this year.



Medal for Ady

C/SGT (SCC) Ady Higgs from **Oxford** unit's Royal Marine Cadets was presented with his 12-year good conduct medal by Capt Mark Durkin (Captain MFP) on board patrol boat HMS Tracker *(above)*.

C/Sgt Higgs has been involved with the unit since the 1980s when he was a Marine Cadet and he has continued being involved with all sectors of the cadet force ever since.

He became an adult instructor in June 1999 (12 years to the day of the presentation) with TS Euryalus and he wanted to get more involved with the joint activities that went on.

"Becoming an instructor seemed to be the next logical step – I have been with various units for so long I just knew I had more to offer," he said.

Oxford unit is affiliated to HMS Tracker and the Oxford University RN Unit, and the cadets were onboard the boat for a sea day to see what the P2000 craft can do and to get a better understanding of life at sea.

"Most of the cadets have never been to sea, and the time spent onboard was a memorable one with the presentation adding to the whole experience," said C/Sgt Higgs.

"I would like to extend my thanks to the Commanding Officer, Lt Brian Drewett, the ship's company of HMS Tracker and the URNU Coxswain, CPO Gary Maskell, for their hospitality."

For details of Oxford URNU see www.ournu.co.uk

Best RN cadet

JOSIE Lockwood was awarded the prize as Best Royal Navy Cadet during the Annual General Inspection of **Welbeck Defence Sixth Form College**.

More than 300 students took part in the Combined Cadet Force parade, and Josie – who was also part of the Colour Party – said: "After the last few months of hard work and study, Saturday was a day of celebration."

Josie, who was presented with her prize by Air Marshal Andy Pulford, the RAF's Air Member for Personnel & Deputy CINC Personnel, plans to study civil engineering at the University of Birmingham, then join the Royal Navy as a marine or air engineer.



Michael reaches pinnacle

A **STONEHAVEN** cadet has been presented with his Petty Officer Cadet gold badges by the **Grampian** District Sea Cadets Officer.

Lt Cdr (SCC) Brian Mair RNR presented the badges to Michael Blacklaw, the Lord Lieutenant of Kincardine's Cadet *(pictured above)* at a ceremony held in Stonehaven's HQ.

POC Blacklaw achieved the pinnacle of his Sea Cadet career by attending and passing a national selection board at MOD Caledonia in Rosyth, where he was assessed over a week in a number of areas including dress and bearing, parade and ceremonial, leadership, fire prevention and safety, instructional methods and Corps organisation.

The final piece in the jigsaw was a First Aid 1st Class course, which Michael attended at HMS Raleigh at the beginning of July.

Plant nursery

TAUNTON unit manned a crèche with a difference at the Taunton Flower Show.

The youngsters ran a plant crèche, where people could leave their purchases from the show, allowing them to wander round without fear of damaging their new acquisitions and then collect thm just before they left.

A small donation to the unit was made for the service.

The show also provided the platform for Taunton's fledgling band to make its public debut.

Many members of the band had never even picked up an instrument just eight months before.

But putting any nerves aside, the group performed under the direction of APO Paul Frazer, by kind permission of the unit's Commanding Officer CPO (SCC) Geoff Kerswell, on both days of the show – a total of six sets in both the main arena and at the bandstand.

As it was a completely new experience for nearly all TS Roebuck's band, they were supported by members of **Portland** unit's band, who travelled up each day of the show – a gesture that was very much appreciated.

Burgee for Venomous

FOLLOWING their annual RN inspection **Loughborough** unit has been awarded burgee status, putting them in the top 25 per cent of units in the country.

During an evening at TS Venomous cadets, watched by parents and friends, undertook a boatwork evolution which included a capsize drill in a sailing boat, a man overboard rescue, a towing exercise and a ceremonial 'Toss Oars' (oars brought to the vertical, blades trimmed fore and aft) in one of the unit's boats.

The Junior section then performed a Crossing the Line ceremony which involved a great deal of fun and lots of people getting very wet.



Business in great waters

No longer forgotten

BETWEEN November 1944 and November 1945 the most potent naval force to sail under the White Ensign was assembled.

While the 5,000 ships of the D-Day are an organisational marvel, the British Pacific Fleet was an even more impressive affair – it certainly possessed considerably more punch.

The RN's role in the closing months of the war with Japan is invariably overlooked – hence the tag, the 'Forgotten Fleet' – unlike, say, the loss of the Prince of Wales and Repulse or the fall of Singapore.

David Hobbs aims to right that wrong in The British Pacific Fleet: The Royal Navy's Most Powerful Strike Force (Seaforth, £35 ISBN 978-1-84832-048-2)

Cdr Hobbs is arguably Britain's foremost naval aviation historian (after a distinguished active career he served as curator of the FAA Museum) and so carriers are at the heart of this excellent book (as they were in the BPF).

But despite this Fleet Air Arm background, the author does not overlook other important aspects of the campaign against the Rising Sun – logistical support (the 'Fleet Train', unsexy but vital), the submarine blockade and minewarfare operations.

The bulk of this copiously-illustrated book, however, is focused on air operations from combat air patrols to bombing raids against Japan – and the retaliation from kamikazes.

American observers were stunned by the RN's response to the latter. *New York Times* reporter Robert Trumbiel wrote: "The spirit of aggressiveness of the men and aircraft is unsurpassed in *any* navy. Their morale is immense."

With hindsight, the BPF has been shamefully passed over for decades; its sole memorial a treadplate and badge from HMS Duke of York and plaque – outside the HQ of the Royal Australian Navy in Sydney.

It deserves higher recognition – for as the author writes its legacy "pervades everything the Royal Navy has done since 1945".

While the RN perfected anti-submarine hunting operations in the Atlantic, at the other side of the world the fundamentals which would be the mainstay of Britain's maritime task forces for the past 70 years were laid down: distant logistical support afloat, carrier strike, working side-by-side with Allied task groups.

This detailed, definitive account should go some way to righting a 70-year injustice.

Win copies of Citizen Sailors

LAST month we were very impressed by Glyn Prysor's debut book, *Citizen Sailors* (out now for £25), a very heartfelt personal study of the men who ensured the Royal Navy overcame its sternest test and triumphed in WW2.

This month, courtesy of publishers Penguin, we have five copies of the 550-page volume to give away.

To win, tell us the two words on the signal which flashed around the Fleet on September 3 1939 announcing that Britain was at war with the Third Reich.

Send your entry to citizensailors@navynews.co.uk or Citizen Sailors Contest, Navy News, Leviathan Block, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth, PO1 3HH.

Entries must be received by mid-day on Friday October 14 2011. The normal competition rules apply.

TIM Clayton is the author of two well-received books on the Nelsonic era of the Royal Navy's history.



The second, *Tars* was a worthy winner the Mountbatten Literary Award in 2008. He also was involved over a decade ago in the television series on the events of 1940, *Finest Hour*, *writes Prof Eric Grove of the University of Salford.*

It was researching for that and the accompanying book that led him to interview former members of the Submarine Service to cover their contribution to the Norwegian campaign, that vital factor in diminishing the strength of the German Fleet to such an extent that a threat to invade Britain was more spin than a serious proposition later in the year.

Unfortunate reductions in the scope of the series led this to be put aside but the work then laid the foundations for a book on World War 2 submariners suggested to the author more recently by his agent.

The result is **Sea Wolves: The Extraordinary Story of Britain's WW2 Submarines** (*Little Brown*, £20 (ISBN 978-1-4087-0229-1).

The book is slightly mistitled as it is less about submarines and more about those who manned them. There is little or no technical analysis and the book is very much based on the reminiscences of the submariners themselves, both officers and ratings, material obtained not only by reading published memoirs but by accessing Imperial War Museum sound archives, the holdings of the RN Submarine Museum and other private manuscript sources and interviews with the participants themselves.

It is all put together in a very professional way. The writing is of a high quality and much light is shed on the activities of British submariners both during the war and before it.

The emphasis is on the earlier part of the conflict between 1939 and 1942 and operations against Germany and Italy. This was the most testing period of the war for the submariners, 1940 and 1942 being particularly bad.

As the author points out, by the end of 1940, 851 British submariners were dead and 115 were prisoners – 28 per cent of those serving. Almost as many men were killed in British submarines over the whole war as were mobilised for it in 1939. He quotes that great submariner, and not inconsiderable historian, Admiral Hezlet, "that whereas in general serrvice in the Navy there were 7.6 percent casualties, in the submarine branch the figure was 38 per cent."

The author skilfully and honestly brings out the stresses of working in a situation of such adverse odds on survival, how certain men, through no conscious fault of their own could not handle the pressure while others could, often only just.

He makes interesting assessments of officers such as Wanklyn, Miers and other, lesser-known figures, which are the more authoritative because they come from contacts with their peers.

One feels however that his assessment of Horton might have been even more balanced and is a reflection of the sway that particular Flag Officer Submarines exerted over the subordinates the author interviewed

There are other cases where the book reflects the weaknesses as well as the strengths of memoir evidence and this brings me to my only serious reservation about the book, the lack of sufficient background reading and hence contextual knowledge.

The author's references are full and clear but this only illustrates the serious and, at times, alarming gaps in the author's research and background knowledge. Inexplicably, there is no reference to the excellent and comprehensive Naval Staff History of submarine operations and none of the recent serious works on submarines and anti-submarine warfare are cited. The book seriously suffers as a result.

One cannot any longer rely on Roskill for the Inter-War period. Anyone writing on anti-submarine warfare in the RN before the war must (repeat must) read George Franklin's absolutely key work on *Britain's Anti-Submarine Capability 1919-1939*; Clayton's inadequately informed remarks on the subject are just plain wrong.

There are other mistakes, often just minor, but which undermine one's faith in the judgements of the author. This is a pity as Clayton's ideas are often interesting and fair but the extent they are well based is more dubious. There are just too many errors to take the book on trust and, given its overall quality, this is a shame..

The problem seems to have been pressure of time. The author himself admits that he was working to a very tight deadline. He was thus unable to consult experts such as former Submarine Museum curator Jeff Tall (even though he helped the author with contacts with submariners) or the Naval Historical Branch.

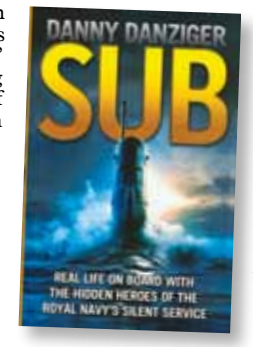
The latter might have pointed out key sources, such as the Staff History, that have to be used to produce a truly a comprehensive account of the subject. It would also have provided advice that would have matured the author's sometimes superficial analysis. His strictures about the Admiralty's negative attitude to submarines do not ring true and reflect popular misconceptions or the understandable prejudices of the author's informants.

Clayton admits that "it is difficult to measure the success or failure of the British submarine effort."

He is perhaps right to point to a shortage of torpedoes, although his criticisms would have more weight if he had tried to explain them more fully rather than just characterise them as "shameful".

The author's contention that Max Horton's deployment of submarines prior to the invasion of Norway might have led to "truly spectacular" results smacks of the special pleading of old submariners. Obtaining sufficiently robust rules of engagement was impossible in contemporary circumstances.

Regular readers of these reviews will not be surprised to learn that I am sceptical too about the contention that submarines played a 'decisive' role in influencing the outcome of the North African campaign. Rommel's logistical difficulties had multiple causes and the truly decisive maritime pressure when it was temporarily applied came from Malta-based surface ships. The effectiveness of enemy surface ships against submarines also rather gives the lie to the old submariner's cry that there are only submarines and targets; too often submarines became targets themselves – hence the terrible cost.



Despite its flaws, this remains a useful work. It is a worthy tribute to the men who fought and died in the British submarines around the world from 1939 to 1945 and I enjoyed reading it. It cannot be recommended as the final historical word but, at its reasonable price, it is well worth buying. It might, however, with a little more time, been so much better.

■ CONTINUING our Silent Service theme, we fast-forward 70 years now to today's submarine operations, *writes Richard Hargreaves.*

Award-winning journalist and author Danny Danziger maintains the successful theme of his popular We Are Soldiers, a collection of first-hand accounts from serving squaddies, to do the same for RN submariners.

Danziger spent three weeks aboard HMS Torbay last year to get a flavour of life aboard a hunter-killer – and to interview around one third of the crew from then CO Cdr Ed Ahlgren to the youngest able seamen. In addition, the author also talked to wives and partners and the man in charge of Silent Service ops, Rear Admiral Mark Anderson.

The result is **Sub** (*Sphere*, £17.99 ISBN 978-1-84744-469-1), a series of first-person descriptions of life in the Silent Service which provide as good a cross-section of characters and jobs aboard a boat as you're ever likely to come across.

There's CPO Richie Barrow in charge of sonar who loves trips under the Arctic ice – as do the rest of his team because of the silence it brings, aside from wildlife.

"Whales will make a grown man cry – it's a noise that gets hold of you straight away. They sound so sad and lost, you feel sorry for them. They just capture your heart."

There's Nicky Alder, the wife of Torbay's marine engineer officer Lt Cdr Mark Alder, who describes how the family adjusts to dad returning home after months at sea.

"He's as white as a sheet and a little bit tubby because the diet's terrible and he's shattered, absolutely shattered. Because he hasn't had female company for a while, he's like a flipping limpet and he sort of smothers me. He'll say things as if I'm a junior rate."

She gives him a 48-hour period to get used to life outside the boat…

There's Cdr Ahlgren who loves the ethos, spirit and camaraderie of life in the Silent Service – but finds it hard to explain the attraction to non-deeps.

"It takes you away from the things you love, all those little nice things in life that people take for granted, like walking down a country road, fresh air, the sun on your face or the stars at night – we don't have any of that for weeks and months at a time."

Of his own experiences during his three weeks with the T-boat, Danziger preferred sleeping in the racks to the bomb shop alongside missile and torpedoes (the NN team prefer the airy nature of the torpedo room, but then the author was given "the plum middle bunk").

He determined that 'no shower' was better than a submariner's shower (which is more soap than water); not having to perform daily ablutions was, the author writes, "enormously liberating".

The one thing Sub sorely lacks, however, is images; other than the cover and a T-boat cutaway diagram (courtesy of *Navy News*…), it's all words – and photographs really would convey the extremely cramped nature of life on board.

That, however, is a trifling quibble; Danziger set out "to introduce and personalise a group of men who heroically do a difficult, dangerous and demanding job" and has succeeded admirably.

And given all the talk presently about 'broken Britain' and the civil unrest sweeping the streets of major conurbations, commentators might wish to read the remarkably frank interview with sonar operator AB Alex Harrad – someone who had a very tough start in life (an alcoholic mother who died when he was 11 and who spent several years in foster care).

In his mid-20s he signed on for a career in submarines "to sort my life out really". It worked.

"Joining the Navy has been a great experience and I am very happy now," he told Danziger. "There's nothing you can really do about the past, so I just look to the future. Staying in the Navy is what I most want – being at sea on a submarine is a cracking life."



● *A rare colour image of a WW2 submarine on operations... HMS Tribune sails through Scottish waters to begin a patrol of the North Sea in 1942*

Picture: RN Submarine Museum

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SPORT

Going tough for weakened lacrosse side

RAF Halton hosted the 2011 Inter-Services **Lacrosse** tournament for the three Services plus police.

Now in its fourth year, the event is clearly improving by the year, *writes Lt Stephen Currie, RAF Shawbury*.

With a very busy grass roots programme, the RN team comprised experienced players and some absolute beginners.

With six players on the team totally new to the sport, a timely training session was held the day before the tournament.

The contest is a long, intense day with each team playing the other in a round-robin format. Each game lasts 60 minutes and the brutal physical nature of the full-contact sport makes serious demands on the body.

The RN initially came up against the police team which was an absolute shock, especially for the beginners. Despite Lt Adam Hughes (Sultan) working all day in midfield, dominating the face off (a restart in lacrosse), the police were an experienced outfit and quickly took the RN apart as they'd never played before as a team.

Nevertheless, many valuable lessons were learned and the beginners from RNAS Yeovilton ended the game with smiles on their faces.

The clash with the Army followed next and how the RN had improved! In defence AET Paul Waller (RNAS Yeovlton) looked in great form, putting in major hits whilst another newbie, AET Tom McCormack, ran his socks off in midfield.

The tackling was aggressive and the attack, marshalled by Lt Currie, also managed to maintain pressure around the Army goal for the entire game. Unfortunately, the RN lost 3-0, but the Army were unable to field an official squad so had already forfeited the match.

And so to the final game of the day versus the RAF with the Inter-Services title at stake.

The Air Force had taken the competition very seriously with a full week of training, regular friendly and league fixtures and even a pre-match beer ban. The RN, having already played 120 minutes of serious lacrosse (a normal fixture is only 80 minutes), were tired but managed to get totally fired up for the game.

Despite their relative inexperience, the RN shot out of the blocks and managed to defend against some very tough RAF attacking pressure.

AETs Jordan Beresford, Rob Harris and Matt Munro gave everything, but the RN were caught a couple of times in transition into defence with the odd goal leaking in. The team therefore found itself 3-0 down at the end of the third quarter.

The Navy weren't going to win the game at this rate, but then came the all-or-nothing move.

Lt Dan Weil (Abbey Wood), the experienced goalie helping keep the RN in the contest, came out of the nets to join up in attack with Lt Ed Kinsella and S/Lt Mitchell Hunter (Sultan). Despite this reinvigorated pressure the RN were unable to score against a solid RAF defence and unfortunately let in a few more goals with the final score ending up 7-0 to the RAF.

The Royal Navy team showed dedication and commitment, and colours were awarded to six new players for this season.

To pick up a lacrosse stick against opponents with years of experience under their belt – and to take the game to them after minimal training – shows that with a little more experience we will be a team to fear.

The 2011 contest proves that lacrosse has come along way in the Armed Forces, but there is more still to do.

For more information contact Lt Weil on daniel.weil568@mod.uk or visit pdevportal.co.uk/sports/lacrosse

Suzuki drives polo squad to victory

AFTER disappointment in the Rundle Cup, the Navy **polo** team met the following day at Windsor for the final of the Inter-Regimental tournament.

Their opponents were the Household Cavalry who were a very strong six-goal side of Capt Harry Wales (aka Prince Harry), Mark Dollar, Jack Mann and Maj Rupert Lewis.

Although starting as the underdogs, the Navy knew that if they played as they had done in the semi finals, where they had beaten a four-goal team from the Queen's Royal Lancers, they could upset the cavalry's plans to regain the silver; but they were under no illusions that this would be a hard match and their performance would need to be sharper than it had been on the previous day.

Starting with a two-goal lead on handicap, the RN attacked from the very beginning and immediately had the Army on the back foot.

Tight marking and good team discipline proved effective and by the end of the chukka the Navy were leading 4-1.

In the second chukka the cavalry settled down and began to recover ground. They found the posts on three occasions with no reply from the RN to level the score at at half time.

After a constructive debrief by RN coach Jason Dixon, the second half found the RN once again playing aggressive but controlled polo to take charge of the game, scoring twice and only conceding one goal, to regain the lead 6-5.

In the final chukka the pace quickened and the HCR scored early to level the tally; but in the fifth minute S/Lt Hiro Suzuki had a spectacular run and the Navy once again led 7-6.

In the last moments of the chukka the RN gave away a 40-yard penalty whilst defending an HCR attack but the shot went wide to seal the Navy victory as the final whistle sounded.

This had been a truly fitting final, a fast and physical game worthy of the Services' oldest and most prestigious trophy.

Although disappointed to lose the Rundle Cup, victory in the Inter-Regimental tournament for the second consecutive year, especially against the cream of Army polo, is testament to the grit, discipline, training and teamwork of the Senior Service.

For the second year running, Suzuki deservedly won the 'Most Valuable Player' award for his outstanding performance.

Two weeks later the RN met the RAF for the Duke of York Cup, the last Inter-Service tournament of the season.

On this occasion Aplin and Suzuki were joined by Lustman and Corbett to face a competent and balanced RAF team.

Starting with 1½ goals on handicap, the RAF were quick to attack but confident defending by Aplin soon turned the play into a Navy assault which culminated in Suzuki opening the RN tally.

The Navy were then unlucky not to score on two further occasions but converted a penalty before the end of the chukka to take the lead, 2-1½.

Maintaining the pressure in the second chukka, the Navy scored three more goals (two penalties and a field goal) but the RAF also converted a penalty to put the score at 5-2½ at half time.

In the second half, the Navy continued to dominate although the RAF defended bravely.

An excellent backhand pass by Lustman had Suzuki scoring the 6th RN goal as the chukka ended.

The RAF fought back in the final chukka to gain their second goal but Suzuki scored once again to give the Navy a convincing win 7-3½ at the final whistle.

Corbett, in his first formal fixture for the RN, played particularly well.



Picture: LA(Phot) Joel Rouse, FRPU West

No hat-trick at Wimbledon

OVER two blazing hot, sunny days at the All England Lawn **Tennis** Club, Wimbledon, in early August the Navy men's and ladies' tennis teams narrowly missed out on retaining their Inter-Services titles to the RAF.

For the men, there were some very tight matches – five of their 12 rubbers went to three sets – but in the end too many went against them to deliver an unprecedented third consecutive title, *writes Lt Richie Moss, Fleet HQ*.

Disappointing though the result was, it was also clear that lack of match practice was the most significant factor and with so many of the younger team members now out of training and deployed, the men's team was always going to struggle to repeat last year's superb performance.

Cdr Nigel Bowen, the men's team manager, said: "We are going to go away and redesign our training regime, which is clearly what the RAF did last year after their inglorious performance."

Despite the disappointment, there were some exemplary performances, in particular from CPOPT Steve Losh (*pictured below*), who won both his singles matches against the Army and RAF on the first day and one of the doubles matches on the second.

Drawing on his 20 years of experience at this level, he demonstrated that he is still very capable of competing and sent a powerful message to the more junior members of the team.

PO Losh's accomplishments at Wimbledon capped an excellent performance at the RN Tennis Championships one week earlier where he won the singles, doubles and mixed doubles titles and was captain of the Neptune side which lifted the Navy Cup. In all, he has managed to chalk up 50 victories at Navy level in both tennis and badminton.

Despite the Navy's defeat this year, there were some other superb achievements and performances from both well established players and several newcomers.

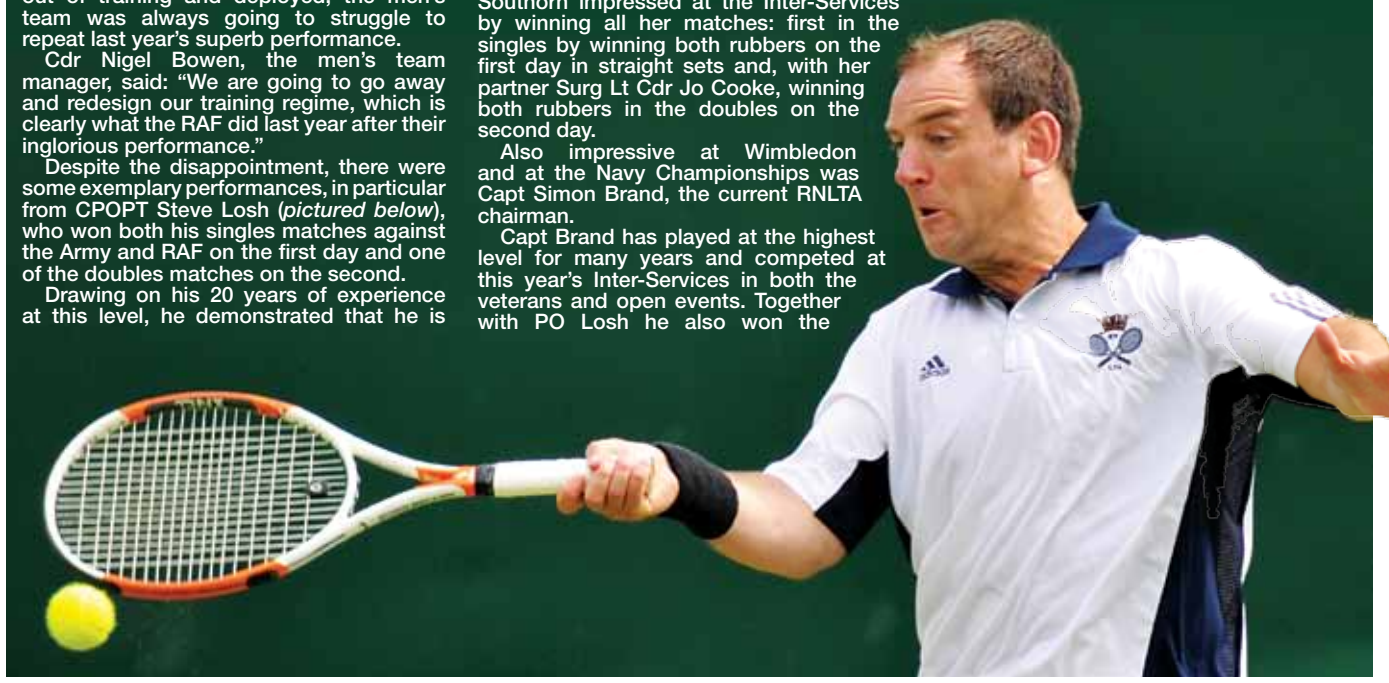
For the ladies, Surg Lt Cdr Bryony Southorn impressed at the Inter-Services by winning all her matches: first in the singles by winning both rubbers on the first day in straight sets and, with her partner Surg Lt Cdr Jo Cooke, winning both rubbers in the doubles on the second day.

Also impressive at Wimbledon and at the Navy Championships was Capt Simon Brand, the current RNLTA chairman.

Capt Brand has played at the highest level for many years and competed at this year's Inter-Services in both the veterans and open events. Together with PO Losh he also won the Navy men's doubles and retained the Vet's singles title with a win over Lt Col Stuart Barnes in the Navy championships.

The latest newcomer for the men is Lt Chris Sharrott and he impressed this year; he represented the RN at both the A and B Inter-Service events. Although beaten in two finals (men's singles and doubles) at the Navy Championships, he demonstrates great ability and has the potential to do very well for the team in years to come.

The asssociation is already looking to next year's event – and expanding its team. Contact your local PTI or come along to the regular free sessions at Portsmouth Indoor Tennis Centre opposite HMS Temeraire on Monday evenings (7-8pm).



Kendo spirit at Temeraire

Continued from page 48

short staff) by Maj Adcock. After long discussions by the judging panel the results were: 1st Maj Adcock; 2nd Wtr Natalie Parks

This year's championships saw the highest standard of junior level taekwondo competition in many years, producing some extremely competitive and tense fights, with an especially strong bootneck contingent.

The rise in levels of both participation and standard can be attributed to the highly-successful martial arts training week run by the RNRMMAA in April.

The patterns competition saw some excellent displays of technical skill, wit all the honours going to the RN.

Dan Grade Patterns – 1st Wtr Parks; 2nd AB Luena Thomas
Junior Grade Patterns – 1st Lt Andy Robert; 2nd Lt Cdr Paul Durham

The sparring competition unfortunately had no male dan grade competitors, but the junior grade competition was dominated by Royal with all three bootnecks, two of whom had never fought in a taekwondo tournament before, making the semi-finals.

Eventually it was an all-RM final and after four minutes of punishing contest it was a draw.

The fight went into extra time with a decisive rear leg-turning kick determining the outcome.

The ladies junior and dan grade sparring produced some very spirited fighting, with excellent tactics and technique displayed throughout.

Junior grade sparring – 1st Mne Jim Hayward; 2nd Mne Dave Peplow
Female dan sparring – 1st Wtr Parks; 2nd AB Thomas
Junior Female Sparring – 1st Surg Lt Cdr Lana Brett-Harris; 2nd LWtr Kirstie Little

The kendo competition started with the individual matches, with all *kendokas* showing great skill and fighting spirit.

The final came down to a Navy-Marines stand-off with both fighters refusing to give any quarter.

An extremely hard-fought match eventually saw the RN victorious with PO Howells ahead of C/Sgt Anderson.

Finally, the team kendo match with the Royal Navy taking on the Royal Marines.

After another exciting and hard-fought set of matches the result favoured the Royal Navy, just beating the Royal Marines to become Senior Service champions.

More details on the martials arts in the RN/RM is available from Maj Adcock (karate) at graham.adcock505@mod.uk or 94832 5823; C/Sgt Al Curtin (taekwondo) at alan.curtin438@mod.uk or 93832 8083; and PO Howells (kendo) at taffhowells@hotmail.co.uk or 07789 638749.

Commandos take a swing at China

MNE Al Henderson takes a huge swing on the impressive golf simulator at the China Fleet Country Club – one of numerous members of the Royal Marines' Hasler Company to take advantage of the facilities at the Torpoint venue.

Hasler, based in Devonport Naval Base and named for the legendary 'Cockleshell Hero' major who later championed people with disabilities, helps wounded and injured green berets back to front-line fitness, courtesy of dedicated facilites and staff catering to their specialist requirements.

Beyond the confines of the base, however, the Hasler men are also making extensive use of the facilities across the water at China Fleet, its therapeutic spa and sauna and especially its golfing set-up.

"Many of the lads played physical contact sports before their injuries but due to the nature of their injuries are unable to continue with their chosen sports," *writes Cpl Joe Zipfel*.

"Golf is a game that can be played by all the lads regardless of their injuries. The use of the handicap scoring system, set to take into account their injuries and mobility issues, allows all the lads to get out onto the golf course, compete on an even scale and maintain their natural competitiveness in a sport.

"This is something that is very difficult to find whilst managing some of the serious injuries that the lads of Hasler Company have sustained.

"Golf has become, for many of the lads, a real passion and they can be regularly found after working hours practising and playing at the Country Club, fully supported by the staff in the pro shop and around the club in general.

"All the staff go to every length to ensure that the lads of Hasler Company are looked after and assisted with whatever they need."

Joe continues: "The club invited the company, including some who had never played golf before, to try out the simulator.

"It proved to be an brilliant piece of kit providing the virtual experience of playing golf courses from all around the world – some of which the lads can only dream of playing on.

"It also proved to be extremely accurate: despite certain members of the company claiming there shots would have gone miles further and closer to the pin; computers don't lie."

Big medal haul but no victory

Continued from page 48

an integral member of the 4x100 and 4x400m relay squads.

The 2012 championships will precede the London Olympics by a few weeks and will be hosted by the Army at either Aldershot or Tidworth.

If the best Royal Navy athletes are available, there is potential for an increased number of individual medals and for the women to push the other two Services close in the team competition.

Realistically, the men's team are not expected to challenge for team honours, but will retain the balance of power that influences the final outcome.

Victory Stadium was also the venue for the Inter-Service Multi Events Championships over two days.

RN athletes competing in the men's decathlon and women's heptathlon had therefore gained some recent experience of high-level competition and fierce rivalry to fuel their competitive spirit.

This annual multi-event championships mirrors similar high-calibre events where there is strong camaraderie borne out of a healthy mutual respect for other competitors.

The event also incorporates separate RN championships.

Unusually, all those who started the men's decathlon and women's heptathlon managed to finish the event; this was a 'first' for a number of experienced and highly-qualified officials judging the event.

Spearheading the RN female heptathlon team was NA Phillips. Her well-developed technique over a range of technical events has underpinned her ability to perform well, even when unable to train regularly.

She swept to victory as the Royal Navy champion, finishing third in the Inter-Services individual championships with a very determined performance.

Never lower than fifth place (800m) in any of the seven events (100m hurdles, high jump, shot, 200m, long jump, and 800m), she was the clear winner of the shot with strong scores in the javelin and 100m hurdles.

Musn Chappell managed to overhaul AB Asquith's points tally in the final event – the much unloved 800m, to finish runner-up in the RN event and a very good seventh place overall.

NA Lindo was the final scoring member of the Senior Service team which fell just 100 points short of beating the Army into second place – an extremely good team result compared with recent years.

AET Wild made his decathlon debut and completed an unexpectedly-high-scoring first day in the 100m, long jump, shot, high jump and 400m, albeit suffering some fatigue in the final event as he contemplated another five events the following day.

Taking advice that the 2nd day (110m hurdles, discus, pole vault, javelin and 1,500m) would present greater challenges, he had sensibly prepared with specialist coaching for the (very) high hurdles and (even higher) pole vault, in which he had no previous experience.

Matt accepts that the severe gluteus maximus pain he suffered was a small price to pay for finishing seventh in the Inter-Services as RN champion.



Wind and Hayle

OVER the summer, the focus of the Royal Navy-Royal Marines **Kitesurfing** Association (RNRMKA) shifted from the progression of intermediate kiters and competition preparations to the grassroots level.

With a training camp to Egypt and the RNRM Championships successfully behind it, the association held its first taster weekend to introduce the sport to a new group of surfers, *writes WO2(AET) Chris James of 771 NAS*.

The taster weekend was held over two days: Saturday saw seven keen people muster in a windy car park in Hayle, Cornwall, ready to experience the thrills of kitesurfing for the first time.

A mix of RN and civilian instructors allowed for a good ratio of at least two to one for the instruction; unfortunately this didn't include DCINC Fleet, the association's president, who had been due to continue the instruction which he had started at the RNRM Championships but had a last-minute change of plan.

The essential theory and safety aspects of powerkiting and kitesurfing were dealt with initially followed by the class then enjoying their first experience of kiting using trainer kites.

This is an important step before getting hands on the full-size inflatable kites and allows the student to get a feel of where a kite's power kicks in within the so called 'wind window'.

Thrilled and exhilarated after this initial session of being dragged around by the trainer kites and now considered capable of handling the larger inflatable kites, known as 'leading edge inflatables', the class pumped up, hooked up and got into the water.

With the weather clearing and the wind increasing and settling down the class were now experiencing the full power of 8-10m² kites in the Atlantic Ocean.

Throughout the rest of the day the class experienced the thrills and spills of 'body dragging' and the basics of kitesurfing which provoked healthy smiles – but also fully topped them up with oggin.

The end of the day saw seven very tired but entirely stoked new kitesurfers with big grins and new dits to spin heading back to the camp site at Culdrose.

Here the barbecue and traditional kitesurfers habit of telling your 'oppo' how big you went rolled on into the evening.

Unfortunately the winds continued to increase overnight to a lively 25-plus knots, which meant the Sunday session had to be cancelled as it would be unsafe for learners, but Saturday had proved to be a great success and a promising start to the new 'taster weekend' venture.

More taster sessions are planned this and next month in Exmouth and Poole to allow personnel from across the RN to experience this fantastic and exciting sport. Visit **www.kitenavy.com** for details.



Picture: Stuart Baker/SB Foto Sport

Ride of Bill's life

FOR the spectators on the Isle of Man and the millions watching around the world via the Internet the TT is a two week event.

For those of us taking part, the build up started months before and the comedown lasted weeks after, *writes Sgt Bill Callister RM*.

After a week's practice, clocking up a fastest lap of 116.427mph, and regularly hitting 114 and 115mph, bike and rider were ready for the first event, the Supersport TT.

The race started and I slowly made my way to the front. A lot went through my mind in that time. I reminded myself that no matter what, I was to enjoy it. I also constantly reminded myself that I was to treat it as just another practice.

We arrived at Gorse Lea and were met with three yellow flags – the third and last was being waved vigorously. We slowed as much as possible because this marshal was desperate for us to slow down and thank God we did. The sight around the final bend before Ballacraine was horrific. There was all sorts of debris across the road, the bike had broken into four or five pieces all I could do was concentrate on not hitting any of it.

A few miles down the road the race was red flagged and we were stopped at Glen Helen, along with a few other riders. Tragically Derek Brien was killed in the accident. My thoughts are with his family and friends and especially those who were up at the grandstand and had to pack up his things.

The race was given a new start time and declared a three-lap event.

I was cautious for the three laps through Gorse Lea for obvious reasons.

The professional guys who were racing for wins didn't quite look at it in the same way – despite there being oil and cement on the road they were just as fast.

They had utter faith in their bike and tyres as well as their own ability – they were in a different league.

I was over the moon with my lap times. Lap one 115.825 from a standing start – before riding at the TT I couldn't go faster than 112.3, now I had just lapped at 115mph from a standing start. Lap two was 112.513 with the pit stop time added to that and my final lap was 116.820 – my fastest time around the course.

I finished 29th with a race average of 115.023 – which gave me a prestigious bronze replica.

I woke for the second Supersport race on the Wednesday to dark clouds and water on the ground.

I love riding in the wet, but the Isle of Man is not the place to be playing around in the wet – it is a little too unforgiving.

At all the big corners the "lack of adhesion" flags were being shown. Quarter Bridge, Bradden Bridge, Union Mills, Ballagarey and so on.

I was expecting to see water on the road at them all. But there was none. As I continued the list of places showing the flag got longer, the less water I saw. I think most riders were beginning to ignore the flags.

When we approached Glen Tramman we were met by a river running across the road. To say I was a little surprised is an understatement.

However things had changed considerably on the second lap. The flags were still out and this time the roads were wet.

By the time I got to Ballagarey the red flag was out and race stopped. *Thank God for that*. It was not a nice race to be in.

The race was postponed till the following day for a complete re-run, when the weather was much better. It proved to be eventful...

The flag dropped and I was off. I got my head down and concentrated on putting together a good lap.

Indeed, unbeknown to me I had lapped at 116.312mph for lap one. How awesome is that, 116 from a standing start?

Things were going well on lap two until I reached Ramsey Hairpin, when the red flag was again out.

No one knew why the flag was out. Other riders pulled up; there were six of us in the end.

I removed my helmet and gloves. Then a marshal shouted at the flag marshal to put that flag away – there was no red flag. What?

I rushed back to my bike and put my helmet and gloves back on. Started the engine and got going.

At the end of the lap, I pulled into the pits, took my helmet off and was fuming.

The last two laps flew by and, at the end of the race, those of us who'd stopped at the hairpin went to the race office to find out what the hell was going on.

Eventually we were awarded the same sector time from the previous lap – that meant that I lapped at 116.187 for the second lap. Lap three was 109.156 with the pit stop and my final lap 115.909 – almost a 116.

I finished in 25th place with an average speed of 114.308 and another bronze replica.

The TT had been everything I wanted it to be. It was made that bit more special by lapping as fast as I did. My goals had been met, the new approach had worked. The bike was a dream to ride. Jeff got her back in one piece too.

If a ride comes along and I don't have to put my hand in my pocket (too far) then I will ride again. I just can't give it up cold turkey. I know deep down my wife and mum would love me to quit, but they know it's in my blood and it's what makes me 'me'. I hope they understand.

Bring on TT 2012! See you all there!

Women fencing near triumph

THE annual Inter-Service **Fencing** Competition took place at RAF Cosford.

While deployments and operations severely restricted the team, a full squad was managed for the 'Triangular', but there was limited attendance for the remainder of the week.

The Inter-Service team contest is known as the Triangular with each of the three Services providing a team of fencers for each weapon: sabre, épée and foil. The women's competition consisted of teams of two fencers per weapon.

Overall, the RN women were placed second, with success over both the RAF and the Army in the épée where POET(ME) Gemma Read and LNN Leanne Parry both produced convincing victories.

Those were against a very strong Army team, two of whom had been selected for the countries for the Commonwealth championships earlier this season.

In foil and sabre the RN came second, forcing the RAF into third place overall.

Results in the men's competition were not as strong. The men's sabre convincingly defeated the RAF and was only just unable to beat the Army gaining second place.

The foil and épée teams, while showing much grit and enthusiasm, suffered from a lack of experience and were both placed third.

The majority of RN fencers returned straight to their units following the Triangular and the numbers remaining to compete in the Combined Services Individual Championships for the remainder of the week were limited.

Of the few who remained, POET(ME) Gemma Read consolidated her recent domination of Services épée, taking the gold medal again this year, plus bronze in the foil.

LNN Leanne Parry and Lt Cdr Mark Barton both achieved individual bronzes in their respective sabre competitions.



Liftin' on Lusty

THE sun-bathed flight deck of HMS Illustrious provided the venue for the carrier's ianugural **powerlifting** competition.

Sixteen competitors from the ship's company gave their all in the squat, deadlift and bench press battling it out for the various trophies up for grabs.

The grassroots event, which was organised by Lusty's AET Simon Cataldo (*pictured above feeling the pain by shipmate LA(Phot) Dean Nixon*), was attended by some of the mainstays of RN powerlifting – Cdr Simon Wynn (Chairman RNPA), Mid Nick Rakowski (RNPA Secretary) and LMA John Strange (RNPA Strongman Rep). In between refereeing and officiating duties, the RNPA officials took part as exhibition lifters.

After an introduction to the RNPA by Mid Rakowski, the squat began.

Current RN 90kg class champion AET Cataldo rounded off the squat discipline with an exhibition lift and showed exactly what squatting deep should look like.

Next, the bench press where the efforts put in by raw beginners and the more experienced lifters alike was particularly impressive.

Cdr Wynn and Mid Rakowski both showed off their benching skills, each with a lift of 150kg, although it was debatable whether it was the bench press or their fetching sunglasses that provided the exhibition.

LMA Strange stepped up to give the punters something a bit different, an equipped squat. The leading hand wore a special squat suit and knee wraps, squatting 220 and 240kg respectively before narrowly missing out on an attempt at 262½kg.

The deadlift discipline rounded off the lifting element of the competition and Lusty' s CO Capt Jerry Kydd presented trophies to the winners.

They were:

AET Andrew Feasey (67½kg class) with 265 kg; ET(WE) Lee Wood (75kg class) with 400kg; AET John Locker (82½kg class) with 455kg; CH Liam Hall (90kg class) lifted 435kg; and AET Kyle Knight (juniors) set RN records with 330kg.

AET Owen Mulligan rounded off the weight class awards with a solid 407½kg in the 100kg class;

Best female lifter went to Lt Rachel Cunningham who put in a great performance. The lack of female competitors is still an area which needs addressing in RN powerlifting, however;

The best squat went to CH Hall who lifted 150kg in that discipline;

Nineteen-year-old AB(WS) Ted Morgan benched 55kg in his first competition, enough to win the best bench press award (he set new RN records in the teen class to boot).

A 195kg deadlift from ET(WE) Lee Wood sealed the best deadlift award for the current RN 75kg class champion;

The team trophy was won by the WE department – LET(WE) Alan Davenport, ET(WE) Aaron Bougouneau and ET(WE) Lee Wood;

And finally, ET(WE) Wood added to his awards collection the best overall lifter trophy.

The day concluded with Cdr Simon Wynn re-affirming the RNPA and what it can offer, not only in powerlifting but in other strength sports such as Olympic weightlifting and strongman.

The next competition is the Combined Services Powerlifting Championships at RAF Wittering on September 21.

Details on this – and other aspects of the sport – at **www.royalnavypowerlifting.co.uk** or find us on Facebook under 'Royal Navy Powerlifting Association - RNPA'.

SPORT



Ollie's (s)miles ahead on C2

THE inaugural RN and RM **Concept 2 (C2) Indoor Rowing Online Challenge Series** took place between September 2010 and May 11.

It is a league, ranking and monthly challenge all rolled into one, with the emphasis on participation rather than competition.

More than 110 personnel from across the Naval Service participated in various parts of the globe in this series.

In total the combined effort of all 110 rowers covered 1,747,893 metres (1,747km or 1,085 miles).

"It does not matter where individuals are deployed or based in order to take part," explains contest organiser Lt Doug Wylie of HMS Temeraire.

"All that is required is a C2 rowing machine and access to the World Wide Web for registration and recording monthly results.

"We have even made provision for submariners where personnel can still record their results if they have missed the monthly deadline if experiencing connectivity problems."

The top three were:

1st **L/Cpl Ollie Osborne (CTCRM)** 897.08 points;
2nd **PO Rob Brown (HMS St Albans)** 893.98 points;
3rd **Lt Cdr Jim Thomson (HMS Manchester)** 879.95 points.

With sheer grit and determination and a huge amount of hard work, L/Cpl Osborne (*pictured above in action at the world championships in Boston, USA*) won five of the nine monthly challenges.

HMS Montrose made a significant contribution to the series with 16 personnel participating. The ship's top rower was Lt Cdr Rory West with 836.32 points, who finished in 12th place overall.

The frigate also possesses the top female rower in LET(WE) Emily Dawn Atkins with 693.05 points, who finished in 41st place overall.

The top rower serving onboard a submarine was CPO Colin Leiba (HMS Talent) with 850.07 points, who finished in 8th place overall.

The 2011/12 series begins this month. Personnel can enter their details (free of charge) at concept2.co.uk, then carry out the monthly challenge by the specified date.

Thereafter, personal performance can be gauged across the Naval Service by comparing data.

See your PT staff for the 'Step by Step Guide' on how to register and enter monthly results. Feedback or suggestions for future challenge series should be forwarded to Lt Wylie (9380 27701) or Paul Winton (9380 23644).



● *AET Matt Wild (824 NAS) propels himself to victory in the RN decathalon* Picture: LA(Phot) Jenny Lodge, FRPU East

Big medal haul – but no victory

The Royal Navy Men's and Women's Track and Field teams performed with great credit and to the best of their ability at the 2011 Inter-Services Championships at Portsmouth's Victory Stadium.

Both teams finished third in a closely-fought contest against strong opposition; the two rival Services having a spread of international athletes to call on, including previous Olympians, some of whom were medallists, *writes Paul Winton.*

All RN team members displayed grit, determination and a high degree of moral and physical courage within a strong team ethos, best exemplified by NA(SE) Dan Tarrant (Culdrose) and NA(AH) Rhian Phillips (Yeovilton) who both competed in six individual events and shared three bronze medals.

The total of 20 medals (men eight, women 12) was the best return for more than 20 years, with many of the recipients reaping the rewards of sound preparation and commitment to a long-term training regime.

Most notable performances amongst medallists were the throwing performances of LS (MW) Andy Dawkins (Collingwood) and LLogs Anna Waldron (Culdrose/Raleigh), who both won three medals.

Andy has been a regular medallist and the highest UK ranked Royal Navy athlete for the past five years; he won his beloved shot putt and took silver in both the hammer and discus.

Anna's first Inter-Services saw her win gold in the shot, silver in javelin and bronze in discus.

No team member dug deeper than LPT Regaina Cawley (Neptune) as her determination saw her narrowly win the women's 400m, with a second-place finish in the 100m.

Perennial medallist, coach and motivator Lt Neal Edwards (Diamond/Raleigh) delivered his fastest 400m hurdles performance of the season – as always, when it mattered most, winning silver.

Lt Emma Bakewell (Sultan) was determined to win middle-distance medals after two fourth-placed finishes in 2010.

The aim was achieved with bronze in the 800m and 1500m, with the added bonus of a personal best time in a very competitive 800m.

Another double bronze medallist was the redoubtable multi-eventer Rhian Phillips with third-place finishes in triple jump and 100m hurdles.

Rhian's inherently good technique in a wide range of events was developed during her schooldays, underpinning her ability to achieve success despite a lack of training opportunities over the past year.

She remains disappointed that her best event (pole vault) is not yet a standard feature of women's Inter-Services competition.

Lt Cdr Julie Robin (RCDM Birmingham) is another who made the most of training and competitive opportunities through her formative years. She has long been a very good discus thrower, including her first Inter-Services title win in 2000. The anaesthetist breathed life into the event, finishing second – just in front of Anna Waldron; it was the only event in which the Royal Navy won two medals.

ET(ME) Daryn Jackson (Illustrious) exploded on to the sprinting scene last year to win unprecedented double bronze medals over 100m and 200m.

A poor start left him with a lot to do in this year's 100m, although another 10m and he would have finished better than fourth.

Fiercely determined, he overcame the disappointment to take silver in the 200m. Daryn knows he gets better as the distance increases, but dreads the inevitable move up to become a 200m/400m runner rather than pure sprinter.

The remaining women's medals were won by Logs Ria Mugglestone (Drake), a comfortable third in the 5,000m and AB Kenisha Asquith (Nelson), an uncomfortable third in the 200m. The latter was just reward in probably her final Inter-Services, after a number of previous close finishes over 100m/200m in which she had finished 4th … including the 2011 100m.

Std Sol Marong (Severn) is another athlete blessed with outstanding natural ability and a graceful, flowing running style that has brought 400m medals at Inter-Services.

Finishing second this year to an Olympic 4x400 gold medallist (upgraded post-event from silver) from the Sydney 2000 Olympics, was no disgrace.

Mne chef Ramsay Kechaka (CTCRM) served up a storming sprint finish to take third in the men's 800m; he has obvious potential to further develop performance over both 800m and 1500m.

NA Dan Tarrant came third in the javelin and narrowly missed out on similar in the 400m hurdles, pole vault and high jump, proving particularly unlucky in the latter where he cleared the same height as second and third-place finishers.

Near-medal performances were put in by previous medallist Maj Jamie Summers (JSU Northwood) in the hammer and AET Tim Kemp (848 NAS) in the 1,500m, the latter has progressed personal bests over 800m and 1,500m through the season.

Cpl Charlotte Stuss (RM Band Plymouth) was disappointed with a non-medal position in the 400m, despite setting a personal best time.

Musn Lucy Chappell (RM Band Portsmouth) committed to compete in three events and was close to a medal in the long jump – her wide range of abilities later bore greater success in the heptathlon alongside sprint relay team member NA(SE) Nicole Lindo (FOST).

Wtr Amy Slater (Neptune) was another sprint relay team member who will be hoping to gain an individual team slot in 2012, building on training opportunities in WO2 Rupert William's sprint group in Faslane.

CPOET(WE) Ian Walker (Victorious Port) never quite expected to match his submarine's name, but was valiant in the face of strong opposition in the 3,000m steeplechase, as was AET Matt Wild (824 NAS) in the 100m and shot.

The latter later went on to win the RN decathlon although he will have to develop his performances in a range of events to repeat that win next year against the undoubted potential of NA Tarrant.

LPT Luke Stewart (Yeovilton) is blessed with good all-round ability; both he and Musn Will Thurston (RM School of Music) were last-minute additions in the long jump.

LPT Lee Carrie (Raleigh) could not quite match his fourth place Javelin throw of the previous year. Mne Andy Stay (CLR) posted solid performances in the 5,000m and 1,500m, with indications that his impressive basic speed may be better rewarded over shorter distances including 800m.

ET(ME)s Stuart Williams and Paul Wareing (both Sultan) also made Inter-Service debuts, the former finishing fifth in a strong 400m and the latter joining him as

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● *Just an ordinary, everyday scene in the Temeraire gym...*

Kendo spirit at Temeraire

THIS year's Royal Navy and Royal Marines **Martial Arts** Association Championships were held at HMS Temeraire.

The aim of the championships is to select the best possible Royal Navy squad to compete against the Army and RAF at the annual Inter-Services.

The first event was the individual kata with good performances from all competitors.

In both the junior and dan grade categories the standard was so high that the judges commented on the difficulty they had in scoring the displays.

With very little difference in the scores the results were as follows:

Dan Grade Kata – 1st AB(WS) Arran Lakeman; 2nd PO Richard McHugh
Junior Grade Kata – 1st PO Steve Crewdson; 2nd WO1 Trevor Starkey

Next came the individual kumite (sparring); again all competitors gave very good accounts of themselves in some very fierce bouts, all showing dogged determination and excellent fighting spirit. The scoring in all bouts reflected the closeness of the contests with the results as follows:

Dan Grade Kumite – 1st AB Lakeman; 2nd Maj Graham Adcock RM
Junior Grade Kumite – 1st AET Paul Moorcroft; 2nd PO Crewdson

The final karate event was the team kumite and after some very spirited performances throughout the event the eventual outcome was: 1st Maj Adcock, AB and AET Moorcroft; 2nd POs McHugh and Crewdson

The overall karate champions for 2011 are the Royal Navy.

The weapons kata event saw two excellent displays of kendo no kata by C/Sgt Mark Anderson and PO Taff Howells, where the competitors carry out a series of strikes and defences using the *bokken* (a wooden version of the Samurai sword).

This was followed by a superb display with the Jo (Japanese

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Published by Navy News, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth and printed by Wyndeham (Roche) plc.